

NEW

REAL  
CRIME

132

PAGES OF THE  
WORLD'S  
CRAZIEST CRIMES  
AND CASES



World's

# WEIRDEST

Crimes

CURIOUS CASES OF BIZARRE BRUTALITY  
AND OUTLANDISH OFFENCES



STRANGE BUT TRUE  
STORIES OF  
MURDER AND MAYHEM



DRIVEN  
DERANGED  
BY DESIRE

Digital  
Edition



FIRST  
EDITION

SHOCKING SCANDALS • MIND-BOGGLING MYSTERIES • FREAKY PHENOMENA









# World's **WEIRDEST** Crimes

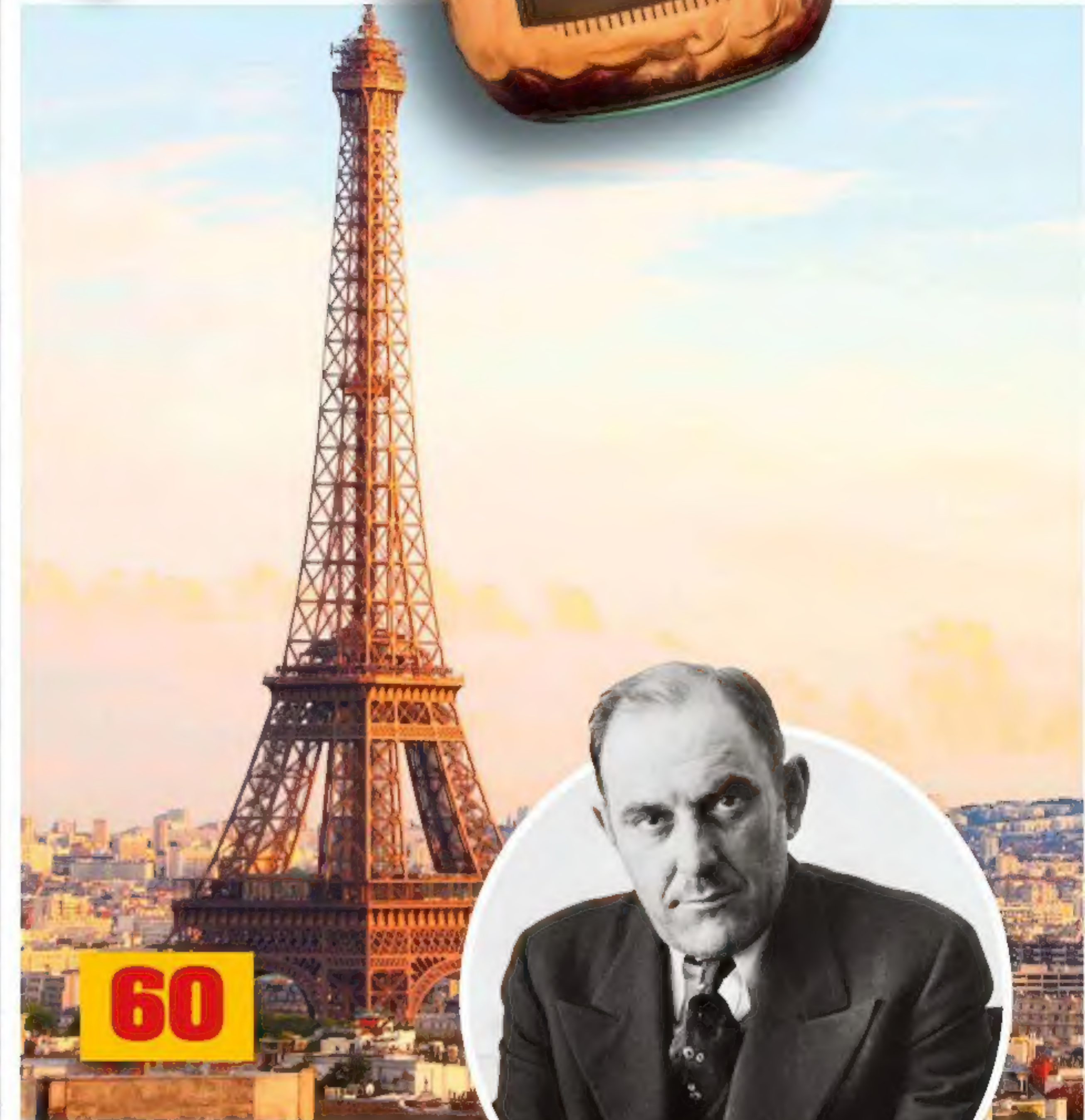
## Welcome

**D**id you hear about the man who ate his lover for dinner? (page 116) How about the woman who solved her own murder from beyond the grave? (page 10) What about the Canadian thieves who made a run for it with millions of dollars worth of maple syrup? (page 64) Inside *World's Weirdest Crimes* you will discover a world of strange cases, from the tragic tale of Lori Vallow (page 42), the Mormon mother who was brainwashed into murdering her own children to the drug trafficking gang who sacrificed souls to Satan to avoid persecution (page 20). Explore how a group of metal bands' entire musical subculture turned murderous (page 34), probe unsolved cases such as the tragic torture and killing of Oakley 'Al' Kite (page 94) and examine off-the-wall mysteries that have thwarted even the most experienced detectives – like the peculiar 'Phantom Barber' of Pascagoula (page 68) and the strange letters that circulated in Circleville (page 100). So pour yourself a cup of calming tea, take a seat and brace yourself as you delve into some of the most shockingly strange crimes ever committed...





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### NO GUM DEALERS

After authorities became infuriated with the improper disposal of gum, Singapore passed a law in 2004 prohibiting the sale of chewing gum, even though it's still legal to actually chew it.



### NO WEARING THE TROUSERS

In place since the 1800s and yet to be repealed, a French law states that it is illegal for women to wear trousers. Fortunately two amendments made in the late-19th century mean there are exceptions to the rule – but only while riding or cycling!



### LEAVE YOUR ARMOUR AT HOME

A law from the 1300s makes it illegal for armour to be worn in the Houses of Parliament. It's worded so that kevlar vests and guns are also forbidden. It is also illegal to die in the Houses of Parliament as anyone who does is entitled to a state funeral.

**A**s times change, so too do the laws. Today we may find it reasonable to deem certain offences 'criminal' that were once performed freely and sanctioned by authorities. So too can we look back in time and laugh at nonsensical laws that were once strictly enforced for the good of society. Some such laws have somehow survived. You won't believe the rules that are in place in the modern world (although many aren't actually enforced!)...



### DON'TS AND DONUTS

In South Berwick, Maine, police officers take their doughnut eating very seriously. So seriously, in fact, that it is illegal to park in front of a Dunkin' Donuts as those spots are reserved for cops.



### DON'T KNOCK ON DOORS

Preventing nuisance behaviour, an 1839 Metropolitan Police Act forbids children from knocking on doors without any cause (aka 'cherry knocking') in London. The act also forbids anyone from flying kites, beating doormats and blowing horns.

# THE WORLD'S WACKIEST LAWS





### OUT OF GAS? OUT OF LUCK

Germany's Autobahn has no speed limit, so while it is permitted to drive like a lunatic or a Formula One driver, it is prohibited to stop or run out of gas. So make sure you have a full tank, and God forbid it springs a leak...



### NO COMMANDO

In Thailand, it is illegal to leave the house without underwear – although it is unclear how anyone would know. Speaking of going commando, camouflage clothing is illegal in 11 countries including the Philippines, Barbados, Jamaica, Nigeria and Saudi Arabia.



### FISHY BUSINESS

One of the strangest UK laws isn't even an old one – Section 32 of the Salmon Act of 1986 makes it a criminal offence to handle salmon "suspiciously". In Portola, California, it is illegal to carry one into a bar, while in Wyoming you can't shoot a fish in a barrel.



### SAFEGUARDING SASQUATCH

In Washington, Bigfoot is considered an endangered species and therefore killing and trapping them is illegal. Previously, the state deemed the act a felony, which was punishable by five years in prison.



### CUFF 'EM, COWBOY

In Blythe, California, it is illegal to wear cowboy boots unless you already own two cows at the very least. So clear your closet of that culturally-appropriated clothing – they aren't a fashion item, ya know!



### NO DOGGY-STYLE

In LA, a law prohibits dogs from mating within 500 yards of a church. And for humans who like it kinky, it is illegal for a man to beat his wife with a strap wider than two inches without her consent.



### HIDEOUS? HIDE

In San Francisco, California, it is not permitted for anyone classed as "ugly" to walk down the street – any street. What exactly constitutes ugly isn't quite clear.



### SHAVE IT FOR LATER

Americans have some strong opinions on facial hair. In Alabama, fake moustaches are illegal in church, meanwhile in Eureka, California, men with moustaches are banned from kissing women.



### STRICTLY SPEEDOS

In France, men must adhere to a strict dress code while swimming in public pools. Due to hygiene concerns, only close-fitting swimwear is permitted – so board shorts are a definite no-go.



# *Sinister Supernatural*





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# FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE

THE STRANGE CASE OF TERESITA BASA, WHO SOLVED HER OWN MURDER FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE, CONTINUES TO BAFFLE AND FASCINATE

WORDS CATHERINE CURZON

**F**ilipino Teresita Basa was born in 1929 and left her homeland behind to come to the US as a student. She eventually settled in Chicago, where she was employed as a respiratory therapist at Edgewater Hospital. Sadly, her quiet, settled life came to a violent end on 21 February 1977, when the fire department attended a blaze in her apartment. They found Basa's naked body concealed beneath a mattress, which had been set alight, a butcher knife still stuck in her chest. Her home had been completely ransacked.

Investigators immediately assumed that the fire had been lit in an effort to conceal what appeared to be a motiveless crime. Basa was well-liked and unassuming; she wasn't the sort of person to have enemies. In some ways the fire had done its work perfectly, burning away all physical evidence other than a single memo, which read, "Get theatre tickets for A.S". While police were suspicious that AS might be involved in the crime, they had no idea who that might be. Every lead fell flat and Basa's boyfriend, initially a suspect, was eventually cleared of any involvement; Basa's murderer had seemingly managed to cover their tracks completely.

Nearly six months after Basa's death, her fellow respiratory therapist, Remibias 'Remy' Chua, and her husband, Dr Jose Chua, contacted detective Joe Stachula. They told the sceptical cop that Remy had experienced vivid dreams and visions in which Basa begged for help. Things

reached a peak one evening when Remy began to speak in a voice that wasn't her own and identified herself as Basa. She told Jose that she had been murdered by a man named Allan Showery and asked him to tell the police. However, when Remy awoke, she had no memory of what had happened.

Unsure of how to proceed, Jose decided not to speak to the police. This brought a second visitation from Basa, who spoke through Remy to ask Jose why

he hadn't done as she had asked. Basa told Jose that Showery was a hospital orderly and had stolen her jewellery to give to his girlfriend. This time, the couple decided to speak to Detective Stachula. In response, Stachula conducted a background check on Showery and found that he lived close to Basa; when he spoke to other hospital workers, they confirmed that Showery had arranged to visit Basa on the night of her death, to fix her broken TV.

When Stachula interviewed Showery, the orderly confirmed that he had tried and failed to fix the TV, so went home. Stachula didn't believe Showery's story and asked his live-in girlfriend, Yanka Kalmuk, if she had received any jewellery from her lover

recently. Kalmuk said she had and showed a pearl ring and a jade pendant to the detective, explaining that she had received them as a Christmas gift. When Basa's family and friends saw the items, they confirmed that the ring and pendant had been hers.



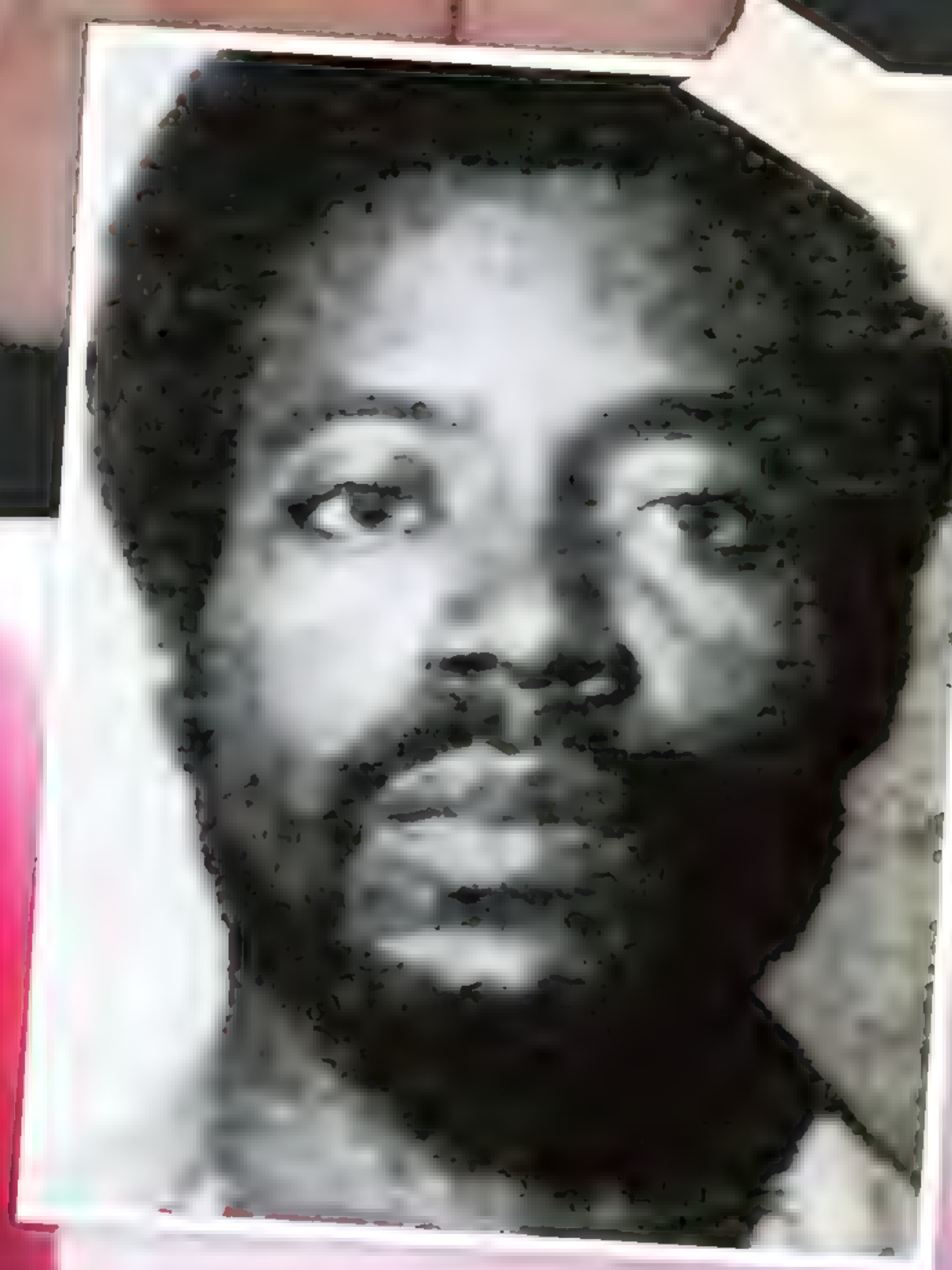
Teresita Basa came to America from the Philippines and began a new life; it ended in tragedy





**ABOVE** Just as the voice of Basa claimed when she possessed her friend, Allan Showery had indeed given his girlfriend the jewellery; he had stolen from her.

**RIGHT** Showery committed cold-blooded murder for the sake of a few pieces of jewellery; he never expected his victim to come back and name him.



With his story crumbling, Showery decided to confess everything. He admitted that he had left Basa's apartment with a plan to come back later and rob her. She let him in and he stabbed her. He then stripped her body in an attempt to mislead investigators into believing that the motive for the crime was sexual, then he threw the mattress on her and set it alight.

However, Showery then retracted his confession, claiming that police had threatened his pregnant girlfriend with arrest unless he confessed to the crime. His lawyer moved to have the charge dismissed, but the judge decided that Showery should stand trial: after all, police had solid evidence and a confession, regardless of the bizarre manner in which they originally received the tip-off to look into Showery, whose initials matched those found on the memo at the crime scene.

Though the trial became a media storm, the jury couldn't reach a verdict and the judge declared a mistrial. Unexpectedly, while awaiting a new trial, Showery changed his plea. He pled guilty on 23 February 1979 and received just 14 years for murder, robbery and arson. Showery was released on parole in 1983; Basa never spoke through Remy Chua ever again.

**“HE ADMITTED THAT HE HAD LEFT BASA’S APARTMENT WITH A PLAN TO COME BACK LATER AND ROB HER. SHE LET HIM IN AND HE STABBED HER.”**

© Getty



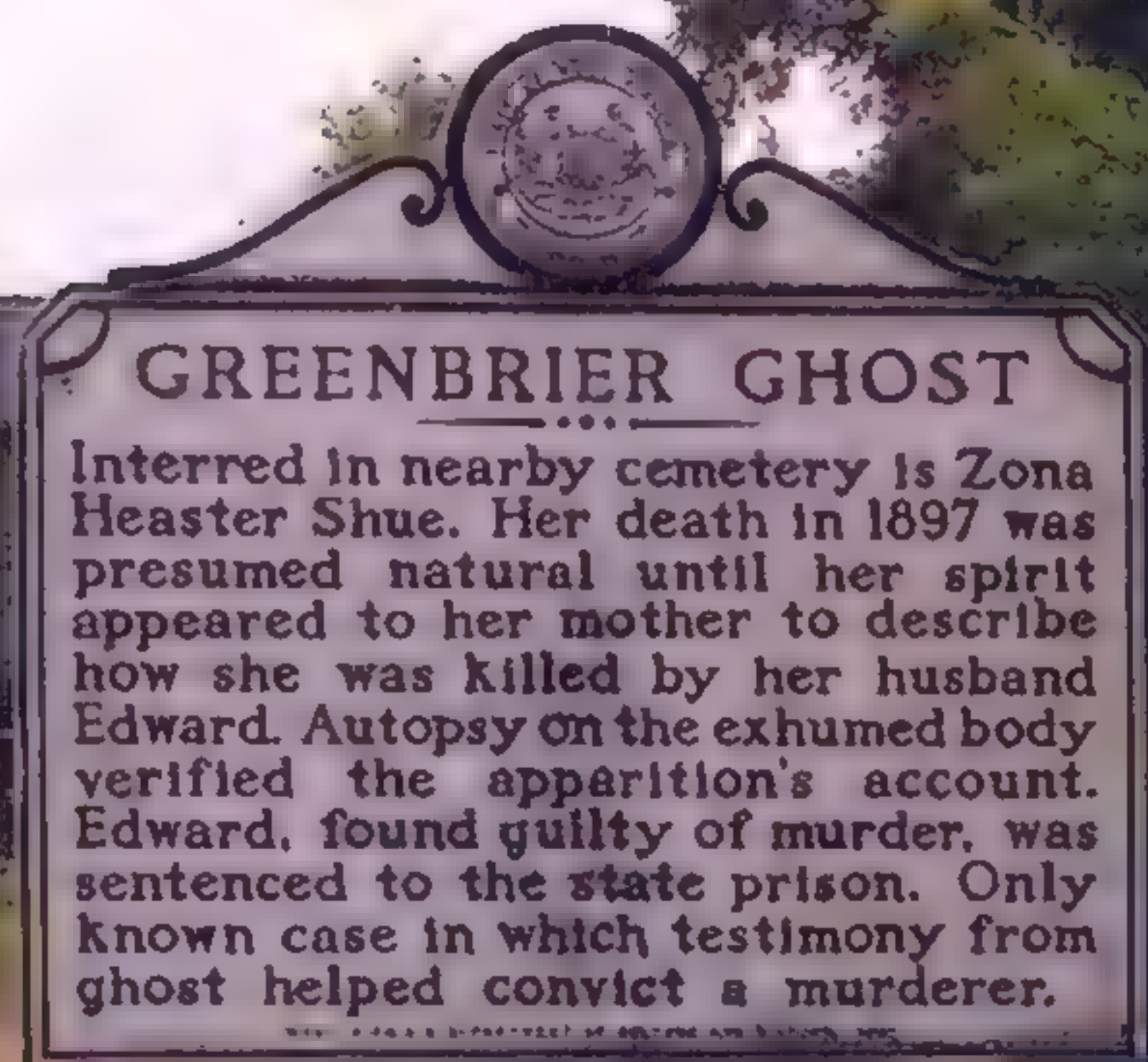
# THE GREENBRIER GHOST

IN THE 19TH CENTURY, A MURDEROUS HUSBAND  
THOUGHT HE'D COMMITTED THE PERFECT CRIME; UNTIL  
THE GHOST OF HIS VICTIM PAID HER MOTHER A VISIT

WORDS CATHERINE CURZON



When Heaster Shue's husband committed murder, he believed he had gotten away with it. Thanks to a ghost and her mother, he was wrong.



ABOVE Today, the remarkable story of Heaster Shue's determination to see her murderer punished is commemorated by a sign on West Virginia Road 100.



In October 1896 in Greenbrier County, West Virginia, United States, Elva Zona Heaster married local blacksmith, Erasmus Stribbling Trout Shue. Although Heaster's mother disapproved of her daughter marrying a man who had already been once divorced and once widowed, she was in love; she wouldn't be deterred. Just a few months later, Heaster Shue (as she was now known) was found dead at the foot of her staircase, the cause of her death listed officially as 'childbirth'. Oddly, by the time the doctor (Dr Knapp) arrived at the house, a distraught Shue had already changed his dead wife's clothes for burial, dressing her in a high-necked wedding gown that entirely concealed her neck.

Though Heaster Shue was laid to rest, she was not at peace. Soon after her mother, Mary Jane Heaster, was washing a sheet that had been used to cradle her daughter's head after her death, when the water turned blood red and a foul smell filled the air. After the vision cleared, Heaster prayed for her daughter to tell her what had happened and a short time after, her prayer was answered. As Heaster was resting in bed, Heaster Shue appeared; she told her mother that Shue had attacked her because he wasn't happy with the supper she had prepared. He had strangled her.

Heaster took her story to prosecutor John Alfred Preston, and begged him to investigate. In fact, he was already aware of gossip in the town regarding Heaster Shue's death, which many people saw as suspicious, and agreed to speak to witnesses and make some enquiries. Among the witnesses was Dr Knapp, who had signed the death certificate, and who admitted that he had not made a thorough examination of Heaster Shue's remains before settling on her cause of death. This was more than enough reason for Preston to have her remains exhumed and a full autopsy carried out to determine her cause of death.

On 22 February 1897, Heaster Shue's corpse was brought into Greenbrier's schoolhouse and laid out. There, during a three-hour autopsy witnessed by her widower, it was



**ABOVE** Mary Jane Heaster had opposed her daughter's marriage from the off; she was determined that her killer would not escape without punishment.

**BOTTOM** Heaster Shue was found dead in her marital home; while her cause of death was listed as childbirth, she had actually been strangled by her husband.

discovered that she had suffered a broken neck. Her windpipe was crushed and on the flesh of her throat, fingerprints were clearly visible. There could be no question: Heaster Shue had been strangled to death.

Shue was incarcerated in Lewisburg on a murder charge. His first wife came forward to bear witness that he had been abusive, while his second wife had died in mysterious circumstances not long into their marriage, just like Heaster Shue. Oddly, Shue was open about his ambition to be married to no less than seven women. When he was in jail awaiting trial, he revealed his plans for four more marriages to journalists and told them that he had no doubt he would soon be a free man. According to Shue, the evidence against him just wasn't strong enough.

Shue's trial for the murder of his wife opened on 22 June 1897. The prosecution's star witness was Heaster, the mother who had spoken with her daughter's spirit. However, Preston was very careful to avoid any discussion of phantoms or messages from beyond the grave, and instead stuck to the facts of the case. The defence, of course, showed no such sensitivity. Shue's lawyer subjected Heaster to an aggressive cross-examination in which he attempted to discredit her by focussing on the supernatural visit that had started the prosecution ball rolling. However, Heaster wouldn't be diverted and her story never wavered or changed. She had convinced the townsfolk, had seemingly convinced Preston and was now doing a very good job of convincing the jury, too.

Shue was found guilty of his wife's murder on 11 July and received a life sentence. This wasn't enough for the townsfolk, who tried to drag him from prison and lynch him, but were prevented from carrying out their plan. Shue was an inmate of West Virginia State Penitentiary in Moundsville for three years, dying of an unknown disease on 13 March 1900. Heaster Shue's ghost fell silent after his conviction; with justice done, she could finally rest in peace.





# "THE DEVIL MADE ME DO IT!"

ACCORDING TO LAWYERS, THE DEVIL HIMSELF HAD COME TO CONNECTICUT,  
BUT DID DEMONIC POSSESSION REALLY PLAY A PART IN A 1981 MURDER TRIAL?

WORDS CATHERINE CURZON

Did the devil really come to small town Connecticut in 1980, to terrorise a family and claim an innocent man's life?



In a sleepy corner of Connecticut in July 1980, 11-year-old David Glatzel joined his family to help his sister, Debbie, and her tree surgeon boyfriend, Arne Cheyenne Johnson, move into their new home. During that trip, according to David, he was attacked by a creature that resembled a Halloween devil, which told him that it would take his soul. That night, the Glatzel family trembled in horror as their house was subject to bangs that were hard enough to shake the walls, strange lights and unexplained noises. It was just the start of one of the oddest episodes in American crime history.

Over the months that followed, the Glatzels became convinced that David was possessed. He suffered seizures, bellowed abuse at his parents and lashed out at his family members; the cynical might say that it's all part of being an adolescent, but the Glatzels thought otherwise. They captured hours of audio recordings and numerous photographs showing David's violent incidents, though these weren't the inarguable proof that David's mother, Judy, had hoped for. David began to skip school and put on weight; his family sat up through the night with him in shifts, in case he had another attack, and even having their home blessed seemed to achieve nothing. Fired by religious fervour, fear and exhaustion, the Glatzels were at breaking point.

After seeing celebrity demonologists Ed and Lorraine Warren on TV, Judy called the pair in. She had been impressed by their notorious investigations in the Amityville haunting case and was sure that the Warrens would be able to help. For Judy's husband and eldest son, however, there was nothing more strange going on than a pre-teen temper tantrum. They alone among the family refused to believe that David was possessed by a demon.

Looking for their next cause célèbre, the Warrens were sure they'd found it in David. Judy, a Catholic who had raised her children in the Church, was determined to do whatever it took to engage the Warrens, but they didn't need any convincing. Born showpeople, the Warrens had turned their careers as demonologists into a successful money-making machine. Lorraine, who claimed to be psychic, and Ed, a demonologist, accepted no payments for their services from the families who sought their help in the wake of Amityville, but instead enjoyed lucrative media appearances and signed big-money book and appearance deals. Little did they know it, but the Glatzels were to be their next commodity.

Immediately upon meeting David, Lorraine claimed to be able to see a malevolent black mist floating beside him. They became near-daily visitors to the house, cataloguing a vast number of incidents, including threats of murder.

“DAVID’S FAMILY TREMBLED IN HORROR AS THEIR HOUSE WAS SUBJECT TO BANGS THAT WERE HARD ENOUGH TO SHAKE THE WALLS, STRANGE LIGHTS AND UNEXPLAINED NOISES. IT WAS THE START OF ONE OF THE ODDEST EPISODES IN AMERICAN CRIME HISTORY”



Today, David Glatzel maintains that he really was possessed. He remains haunted by his childhood experiences at the centre of the spotlight

“ARNE CHEYENNE JOHNSON CHALLENGED THE DEMON THAT WAS POSSESSING DAVID TO LEAVE THE YOUNGSTER AND COME INTO HIM INSTEAD. AND JUST LIKE THAT, DAVID WAS CURED”



until the Catholic Church finally agreed to a series of exorcisms. It was during one of these ceremonies that Johnson challenged the demon that was possessing David to leave the youngster and come into him instead. And just like that, David was cured. His seizures stopped, the growls and guttural outbursts ceased and he was able to go back to school and resume the life he had enjoyed before his apparent possession. Lorraine, meanwhile, later claimed that she had filed a report with local law enforcement warning them that Johnson had made a terrible mistake: inviting possession, she warned, could only end in violence.

But the story doesn't end there.

In November 1980, Debbie Glatzel took a job as a dog groomer at the Brookfield Pet Motel, working for a man named Alan Bono, who had moved to town only recently. Bono lived in an apartment at the Pet Motel and he offered Debbie and Johnson their own apartment on site too. Even though the couple had been living with Debbie's family in order to help with managing David's various outbursts, the events had left them shattered and the new apartment offered them a fresh start away from bad memories. Debbie decided to take the job and she and Johnson moved into the apartment.

On 16 February 1981, approximately five months after the exorcism, Johnson called in sick to his work at Wright Tree Service and went along to see Debbie at work. There they were joined by his sister, Wanda, and Debbie's nine-year-old cousin, Mary, as well as Bono, who took the group out for lunch. Bono and Johnson began

drinking heavily, so much so that when Debbie took the girls off for pizza, she had a feeling that there might be trouble on the way.

By the time Debbie, Wanda and Mary got back to the kennels, they found Bono and Johnson drunk and agitated. Debbie decided to break up the gathering at this point, but Bono grabbed Mary and refused to let her go. Johnson stepped in and demanded that Bono free Mary, which he then did, choosing instead to go toe-to-toe with Johnson. By this point, desperate to break up the threatened confrontation, Debbie put herself between the two men, but Johnson drew a knife and plunged it into Bono multiple times. He died of his injuries in hospital later that day.

When police picked up Johnson a short distance from the site of the murder, he claimed to have blacked out. As he was being put into the car, Johnson told arresting officer, Sergeant Gordon Fairchild, that he needed help for a drinking problem, and had never meant to hurt anybody. Upon arriving at the station, Johnson learned that Bono had died of his injuries; he became incoherent, then immediately fell into a deep sleep. Once he woke, Johnson was charged with first degree murder; his bail was set at \$125,000 and he was transported to Bridgeport Correctional Center.

The killing shook Brookfield, which had not seen a murder in the 193 years since its founding. But if the murder was shocking, things stepped up to a whole new level of weirdness when Johnson's lawyer, Martin Minnella, unveiled his audacious defence. Johnson,

Ed and Lorraine Warren were artists turned demonologists, who claimed that they acted only in the best interests of the Glatzels







**ABOVE** Johnson's mother, Mary, and girlfriend, Debbie, stood by his side throughout the trial and his incarceration. He and Debbie got married just before his release.

Minnella intended to argue to the jury, was not guilty of murder, because he had been possessed at the time of the killing. In short, the devil made him do it.

According to Minnella, when Johnson had challenged the demon possessing David Glatzel to take him instead back in October, it had done just that. Debbie would testify that her boyfriend had since experienced blackouts and trances and uttered deep, inhuman growls. With no prior criminal involvement and no history of violence – though he was certainly carrying a pocket knife – Johnson simply wasn't the kind of man to commit murder. He had played Little League, sang in the church choir and even bought his mum a jalopy with money from his paper round so she didn't have to ride the bus. That, according to Minnella, left infernal influence as the only possible explanation.

It was the first time that demonic possession had been used as a criminal defence in the United States of America and, unsurprisingly, it sent the media into a frenzy. Minnella jetted off to the UK to meet lawyers who had planned to use the possession defence in criminal cases, though they never made it as far as trial. Of course, the Warrens hoped to get a look-in, and they made themselves available to Johnson's

defence team should they be needed. In fact, the Warrens had already involved themselves by visiting the Brookfield police department on the day after the killing to tell officers that he was possessed. They also hit the media circuit, promising a book, film and lecture tour and discussing with anyone who asked what they knew of the case. For some, of course, it was all a little too wacky. There were plenty of cases in which a person had committed violent acts that they blamed on the devil; invariably there were two explanations: mental illness or simple lies. So far, the devil had not taken the stand. This didn't deter Minnella, who intended to subpoena the priests who had exorcised David and force them to testify.

The trial opened on 28 October 1981, at Connecticut's Superior Court in Danbury. It was presided over by Judge Robert Callahan, who listened patiently as Minnella submitted a plea of not guilty by virtue of possession, a plea that he intended to prove through judicious use of experts and witnesses. As soon as Minnella had concluded his initial plea, Callahan rejected the defence, arguing that there was no evidence in existence that could prove possession as a phenomenon. For that reason, said Judge Callahan, it would be unscientific and inappropriate to use possession as a criminal defence. With that in mind, any testimony that attempted to use exorcisms and demonic possession in defence of murder would be thrown out and any witnesses ejected. He directed the jury that they must not at any point even think of possession as an explanation for the killing, as it simply would not be allowed. At this point, representatives of the Catholic Church, who had been watching the proceedings, rose and left the courtroom, no doubt with their sighs of relief echoing in their wake.

**“IT WAS THE FIRST TIME THAT DEMONIC POSSESSION HAD BEEN USED AS A CRIMINAL DEFENCE IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND, UNSURPRISINGLY, IT SENT THE MEDIA INTO A FRENZY”**





With his planned defence smashed into pieces, things looked bleak for Johnson as the trial progressed and Minnella pivoted his plea towards self-defence. Tales were told of jealous love triangles and of a drinking binge that ended in death. There was no mention of possession. The jury deliberated for three days before coming back with a verdict on 24 November 1981, finding Johnson guilty of first-degree manslaughter. On 18 December 1981, Johnson was sentenced to between ten and 20 years in prison. While he was incarcerated, Johnson and Debbie were married; he was released after serving a little under five years and displaying exemplary behaviour.

Working with author Gerald Brittle, in 1983 the Warrens published a book about the case entitled *The Devil in Connecticut*. Though they claimed that the profits were shared with the Glatzels, the family reported that they had only received approximately \$4,000, against the Warrens' reported \$81,000. More than two decades later, when the book was republished in 2006, David and Carl Glatzel Jr sued the author and publisher. Though David and Debbie always stuck to their story that the possessions of David and Johnson were real, Carl believed that the whole thing had been a hoax cooked up by the Warrens and that David had just gone along with it, hoping to make his family rich. The killing of Bono, according to Carl, was motivated by jealousy, and Johnson's obsessive belief that his girlfriend was sleeping with her employer.

Carl later revealed bombshell evidence that adds a whole new angle to David's reported possession. He claimed that his mother had been drugging the family with a sleep aid named Sominex, leading to audiovisual hallucinations, blackouts and other long-term side effects.

The case has led to at least two films; a TV movie in 1983 entitled *The Demon Murder Case*, and in 2021 *The Conjuring: The Devil Made Me Do It*, which made more than \$200 million dollars. In 2023, Netflix released a documentary entitled *The Devil on Trial*, which re-examined the case, featuring interviews with those involved as well as archival footage and reenactments.

There are no easy answers in this case and for believers, it offers a terrifying glimpse into the power and influence of evil. For those who don't believe in demonic possession, it is nothing more than an audacious gamble, an effort to get away with taking a life by selling a Halloween horror story as a defence.

Though Debbie Glatzel passed away in 2021, she remained married to Johnson until her death. Johnson maintains that he was possessed at the time of the killing and David agrees, firm in his belief that Johnson became possessed when he took on the demon that had been tormenting him. However, David does believe that the Warrens exploited his family for cash, claiming that they promised him he would be rich and famous as a result of his possession. Sadly, the surviving Glatzel siblings are not close, each having been impacted by the events that took place back in the 1980s.

More than 40 years after Bono's death, the tragic case continues to fascinate true crime and paranormal enthusiasts alike. As Judge Robert Callahan said, there can be no concrete evidence of possession and for that reason, on both sides of the debate, conversation continues. With books, articles, films and documentaries continuing to be made and a public hungry for more and more weirdness, it's unlikely that the demonic possession defence will lose its fascination anytime soon.

**ABOVE** Johnson stabbed his girlfriend's employer to death, however, he intended to claim that the devil made him do it.

**ABOVE, LEFT** The case of Johnson was used for the third film in *The Conjuring* series, all of which focus on famous cases that were taken on by Lorraine and Ed Warren.





# VOODOO GODMOTHER

THE SKIN WAS CLEAR, THE FEATURES STRONG AND THE EYES SET DEAD AHEAD AS THE RITUAL SMOKE ROSE AROUND THEM. THE ONLOOKERS (SEEKING THEIR HEARTS' DESIRES) WERE TERRIFIED. IT WAS A FEELING AS HEADY AS THE DRUG-TRAFFICKED HIGHS THE FIGURE'S 'MAGIC' WOULD CREATE

WORDS DR K CHARLIE OUGHTON







**ABOVE** Sara Maria Aldrete was given the name 'La Madrina', which means 'the godmother' in Spanish, by Adolfo Constanzo when she joined his cult

**LEFT** Neighbours dare not enter the former home of Adolfo de Jesus Constanzo, as they claim it is hexed



**S**ara Aldrete is a woman of contradictions. With the body of an Amazon, this blonde bombshell stands at over 1.8 metres tall and was a star student at her college. When classes finished, however, she would drive across the border to Mexico to become La Madrina – High Priestess of the Narcosatanica drug cartel cult. Together with her former lover Adolfo de Jesus Constanzo, she led rituals torturing then cooking human sacrifices to protect the henchmen who shipped their organisation's marijuana far and wide. Convicted in 1990, Sara claims she was actually held prisoner and forced into participation while Constanzo led the rites, but former friends were later freaked out when remembering her knowledge of the occult long before the brains hit the pan.

## HUBBLE BUBBLE. DOUBLE TROUBLE!

Sara grew up in Matamoros, a border town between Mexico and the USA. She lived at home with her parents but would cross into Brownsville each day to study at Texas Southmost College. Sara was not ordinary, but above average – she was on the honour roll for achieving good grades, had won the school's Outstanding Physical Education Award, taught aerobics and still found time to work for the college administration to boost the financial aid that she was getting to support her studies. Her fellow students and teachers (including an anthropology professor who taught on religious rituals) found her to be a good girl and totally dedicated. It's a wonder that she didn't also breed cute puppies, so wholesome was her image at the time.

But as Former Deputy Sheriff George Gavito commented, it wasn't unusual for students on the border to have different lives either side of it: "Sara would cross that border to Mexico and she would become somebody else," he said. She was a resident alien with permission to be in both countries. It was later noticed that for someone on financial aid, she always left campus in a new car that was equipped with what newspapers at the time reported as "a cellular phone", practically unheard of in 1989. Sara was getting money and, it seemed, maybe more, from someone or somewhere else.

Mexico is joined to the land of the free, but it's not all prosperity. The capital city is dominated by the Metropolitan cathedral, the oldest and largest in Latin America. It is a blazing sun of gold and the religious icons of the virgin and child, surrounded by the saints. In the bustling city centre, emporiums are filled with expensive religious paraphernalia, from statues of the blessed Mary to church-sized bells so that shoppers can recreate the experience of the holy house at home. Step outside of the main streets, however, and it's a different story. The opulence promptly dissolves into run-down avenues, which are nevertheless littered with beautiful, wind-kissed shrines. The tourist pamphlets advise travellers to stick to the main straits to avoid corrupt police or being kidnapped for small ransoms by unregulated taxi firms. In places where poverty looms at the door, people seek deliverance, either by a God or by drugs that are used to blot out desperation – in Mexico, the two may go hand in hand.



**ABOVE** Adolfo Constanzo, 'the godfather of Matamoros', introduced Sara to witchcraft and dark magic, eventually making her the high priestess of his cult

## TWISTERED SISTER

Sara may have desired to escape the drab surroundings of her life – a shotgun wedding that had taken place when she was little more than a child. To weather the hurricane of her emotions, she followed the yellow dust road to the drama of danger and the lair of Adolfo Constanzo. A career criminal, he had noticed that Sara dated one of his rivals and had links to the infamous Hernandez cartel, so he initiated a meeting with her. Perhaps if she could be persuaded to worship at his altar, he could convince her of her own ability to have power over his men.

Adolfo's intense charisma was an immediate attraction for the young girl. His self-belief may well have been inbuilt by his lineage, for his family had practiced Santeria – a form of occultism or witchcraft – for years. It claims to be the real deal rather than the type of illusion associated with stage magic. Occultism can in theory be white or black, good or bad, or any number of grey areas in the middle. It depends on how it is used and, of course, there is huge debate as to whether or not it works. What it can definitely do is bestow an air of mystery on the practitioner that can make them – or the idea of the magick they claim

to be able to do – irresistible to those who are looking for something missing in their own lives. Whether or not occultists have supernatural powers becomes immaterial because they can change people's behaviour if those people believe their behaviour can be changed. Add this 'power' to the fact that Adolfo was also handsome, and it's not hard to see how Sara fell for him, and he is said to have taught her how to control death itself.

## SOCIETY SORGERESS

The glamour of witchcraft was increased because the cult was dealing with some very powerful people. Various kinds of occultism are popular in South America and, just like with religion, believers come from all corners of society. The who's who of Mexico, from

police to politicians and famous celebrities, would visit 'El Padrino' – the Godfather Adolfo and his sorcerer, Sara. They would sign their names in the book that contained the arcane symbols that were the workings for all of the rituals. This formality done, the seekers would explain their innermost wishes – 'inner' being the operative word, as Adolfo specialised in human sacrifice. He'd 'developed' the Santeria shown him by his ancestors, crossing it with Palo Mayombe-style sacrificial practices from the Congo. It's common in folk magick across the world to place things, including precious metals and animal parts, representing the aim of the spell into a container before performing a ritual to give it power. Lucky rabbit's foot charms are a remnant of this practice, but Adolfo switched beast for human. If he wanted to prepare a strength potion for a client, he would add human muscle to his pot or nganga. Seeking renewed vitality? That would require the sacrifice

**“IT'S NOT HARD TO SEE HOW SARA FELL FOR ADOLFO, AND HE IS SAID TO HAVE TAUGHT HER HOW TO CONTROL DEATH ITSELF”**



**ABOVE** More than a dozen bodies were found in multiple graves at the cult site, including that of missing college student Mark Kilroy

**RIGHT TOP** Aldrete was given a six-year prison sentence in 1990 for criminal association, but in 1994 she was convicted of multiple murders and given a further 62 years in prison

**RIGHT BOTTOM** When police raided Adolfo's ranch, they found this caldron containing bones, a turtle shell, the head and claws of a rooster, a goat's head and a horseshoe





VOODOO GODMOTHER



This ritually sacrificed chicken was also found when police raided Adolfo's ranch

## WHICH WITCH?

THE NARCOSATANICA CULT FUSED DIFFERENT OCCULT TRADITIONS. THESE INCLUDED:

### SANTERIA

*Africa*

Originating in the Yoruba religion of Africa, it is a worship of that land's elemental spirits, or Orisha, disguised as Roman Catholic saints. It was brought to America by Yoruba slaves who wished to honour their traditional practices without their masters' knowledge.

Its practices include fortune telling and the use of trance, drumming and dance as a means to communicate with their ancestors. Initiated priests and priestesses may also ritually sacrifice animals during the ceremonies. Santeria was originally an insulting term meaning 'saint' that was used by the slave masters to indicate the slaves' supposedly easy conversion to Christianity. Practitioners prefer to call their religion Regla de Ocha or 'Reign of the Orishas'.

### PALO MAYOMBE

*The Congo*

Developed in the Spanish Empire among Central African slaves who had come from the Congo region, this belief system holds that natural objects called nganga – particularly sticks – may possess powers that are often linked to the spirits of the dead. It is believed that these spirits may be summoned through rituals for assistance or guidance. Rituals can often use objects such as bone, including those from humans, and the practice has been connected with grave robbing in Venezuela and New Jersey in the United States of America. Other, less controversial aspects of the system include battle dancing and music. However, not all practitioners of Palo Mayombe use human remains, or indeed any objects that are connected with crime.

### BRUJERIA

*Latin America*

This practice has a focus on divination – the attempt to find hidden information. It uses methods including astrology, fortune telling and necromancy – communication with the dead. Focused on the spirits of nature, it also includes the use of substances such as mushrooms, peyote and coca to induce religious visions and altered mental states. While it has a focus on the use of spells and potions to create effects, practitioners may also provide curanderismo, a healing system.



**“ BLOODIED WALLS, BURN MARKS ON THE FLOOR, AN ALTAR AND CANDLES WERE FOUND BY POLICE WHEN THEY RAIDED THE LITTLE BEDROOM SARA KEPT IN HER PARENTS’ HOME ”**



of a young child or maybe even a newborn babe. Corpses missing hearts, brains and vertebrae were found buried in the grounds of the Narcosatanica's ritual shack.

Trade was swift, but sustained money in the Mexican underworld meant drugs. The cult's next mission was to plan how to keep their trafficking mules out of sight of the police, and for this they needed brains. Several acolytes were sent to a street popular with spring-breaking students for its cheap drinks and thriving nightlife. There they chanced upon Mark Kilroy, a bright medical student and all-round good American. He was kidnapped on a side road, taken to the ritual hut and murdered.

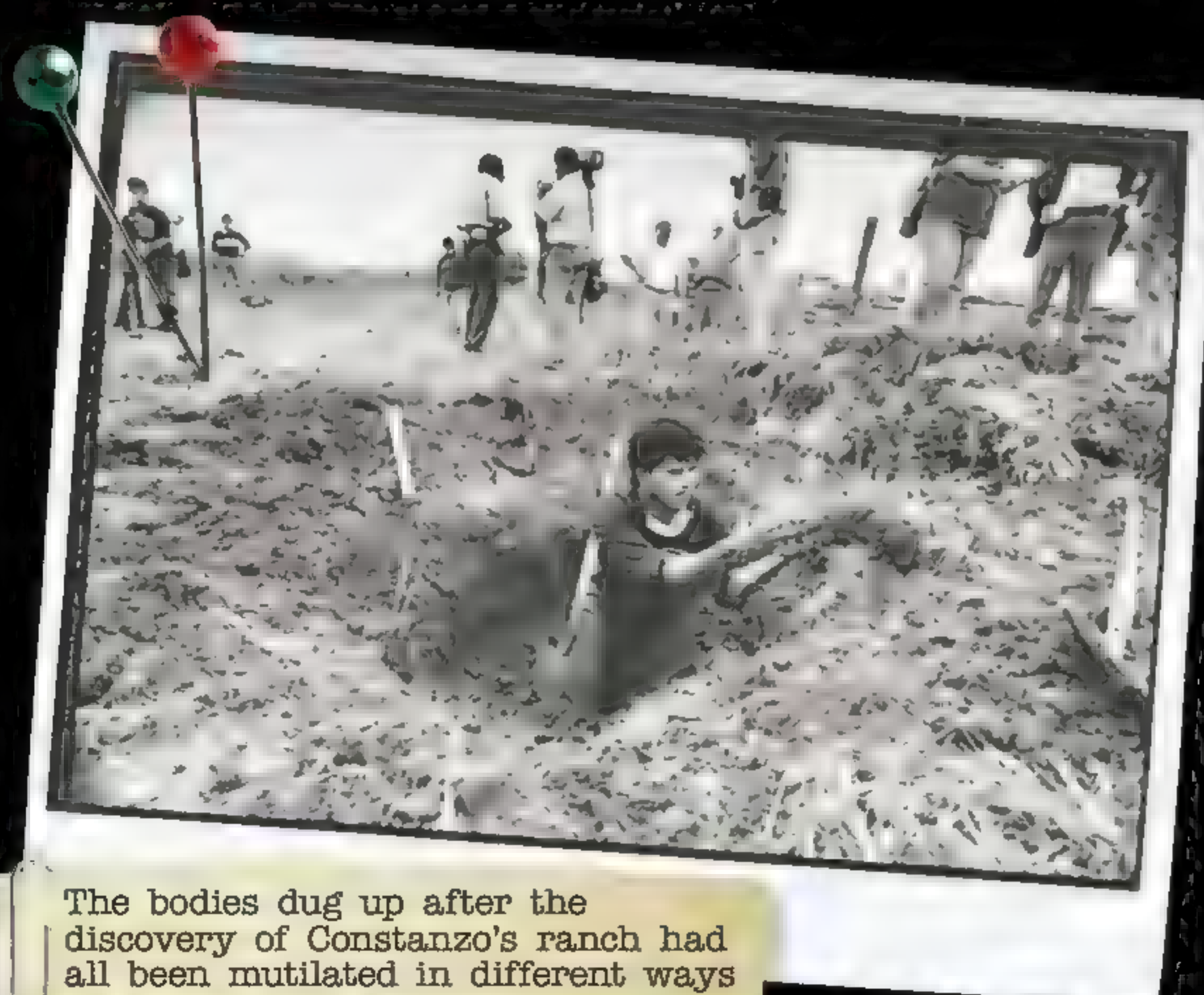
The publicity surrounding this final murder led to the police seeking out the hut.

Justice had been unable to apprehend the gang largely because, according to Former Deputy Sheriff Gavito, many Mexican police believe in magick just as much as the civilians do. For those officers, it must have felt like a trip to Oz to venture off to see the great and terrible cult leader and return with the wizard's head as bounty for their defiance.

Gavito, a large, animated man who had years of experience on the force, was on the expedition himself. He knew that people were shielding the cultists out of fear that armies of followers, probably propelled by the flames of hell itself, would wing their way to anyone who tried to stop them. Gavito knew those wings would have to be clipped. Picking up his own trusty plastic wand, he dialled the magic number of the media to debunk the deluded drug devotees.

That afternoon, a team of police pulled back the curtain on the secretive world of Narcosatanica. They, like Sara, followed the yellow dust road to a little shack with a green roof surrounded by a tumble down wooden fence. Unlike Sara, and advancing with the power of logic, they set fire to one of the ritual pots that had been left outside. A dragon screech of flame engulfed the building. Neither demon nor henchman materialised and the lie of the couple's invincibility was caught on film and beamed to television sets across the land. It didn't matter if magick was possible or not, Adolfo's was not strong enough to defeat Mexican law, and he went on the run, taking Sara with him.

**ABOVE** Aldrete has spoken from prison about her experience with the Narcosatanica, and she maintains her innocence regarding the murder charges



The bodies dug up after the discovery of Constanzo's ranch had all been mutilated in different ways



# SARA'S SANTERIA SEDUCTION SPELL?

MANY OCCULT PRACTITIONERS ARE FAMOUSLY SECRETIVE ABOUT THEIR RITUALS, BUT A LOT OF THE SAME INGREDIENTS ARE USED IN MAGIC ACROSS THE WORLD. SORCERESS SARA COULD HAVE USED A POTION LIKE THIS TO BEND A RIVAL DRUG TRAFFICKER TO HER WILL

## LEMON JUICE

Associated with the Sun, a zing of magical lemon may bestow growth and self-confidence needed for that daunting first date.

## ROCK CANDY

Surely every love spell should contain sugary things for your intended sweetheart?

## COOKING OIL

While ingredients may vary, oil is often just used to cook the other ingredients together.

## A BLACK DOVE

While white doves are a symbol of peace, a black dove may symbolise restlessness.

## RED WINE

Red is associated with the beating heart of romance, while wine may rob the mind enough to let the body be persuaded.

## NEEDLES

Metal is often associated with persistence, and needles might be used to make the intended 'heart sore' for the spellcaster.

## EARTHWORMS

African religions emphasise the natural world. The worm may be used to 'earth' the spell to materialise the result.

## MERCURY

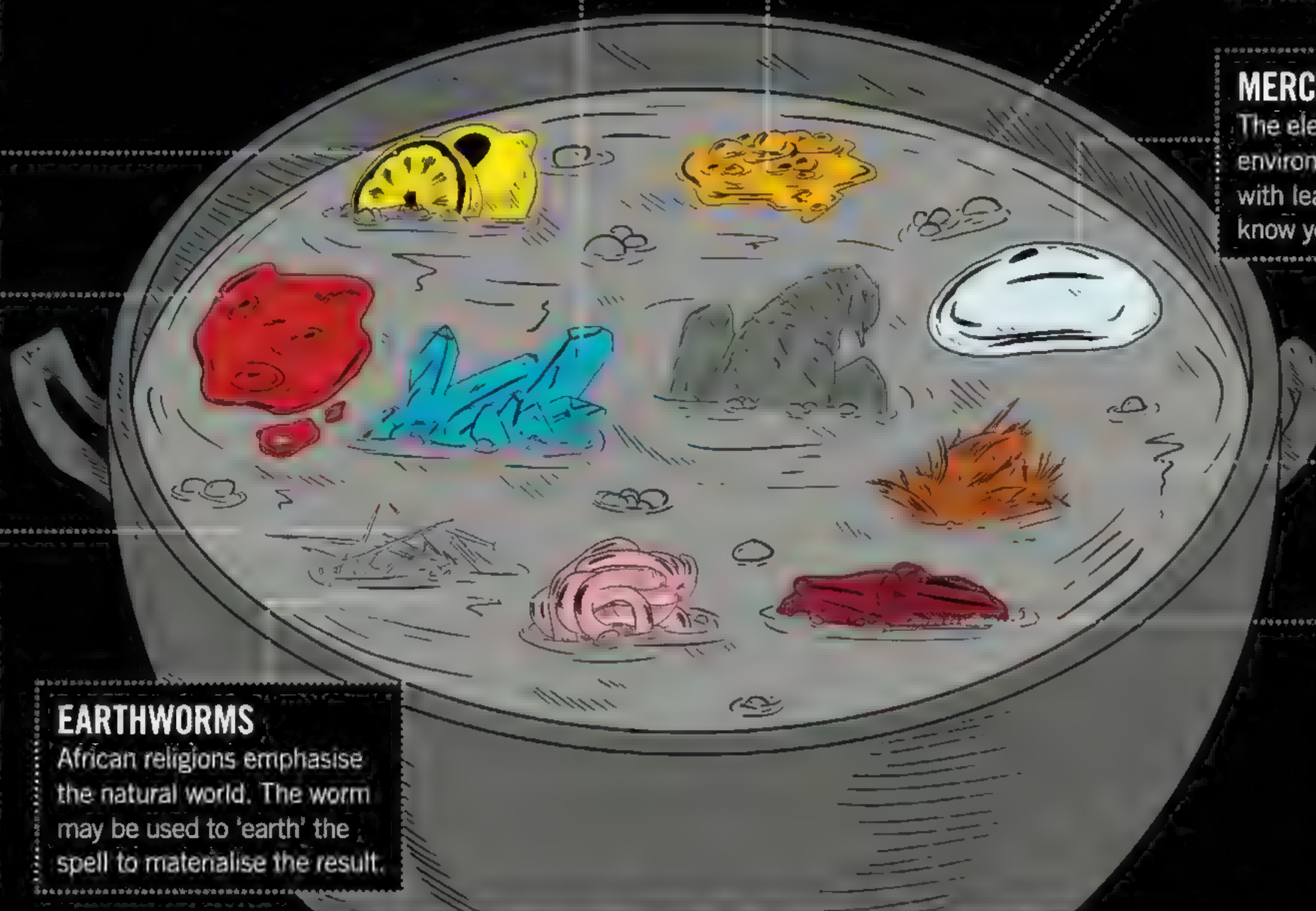
The element that changes with its environment is often associated with learning. Good for 'getting to know you'.

## HAIR

Hair and other body parts are popped in the pot to represent people and, thanks to DNA, genetically tie someone to the spell.

## MENSTRUAL BLOOD

Blood is vital to life, sustaining the body. Menstrual blood carries additional meanings associated with pregnancy.



Sara, Adolfo and other key cult members were later cornered by police. Adolfo chose death over prison and was shot by one of his followers. Sara was taken into custody.

## THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

"I want to see my father," Sara said at her arraignment. She claimed that Constanzo had forced her to go into hiding with him and that she had known of the murders only through TV reports. Furthermore, she asked that her apologies be conveyed to Mark Kilroy's family, and co-cultist Alvaro de Leon Valdez backed up her claim that she was not involved in the murders. That said, it's likely that she did want to click her heels and return to Matamoros, before the law did at any rate...

Bloodied walls, burn marks on the floor, an altar and candles were found by police when they raided the little bedroom Sara kept in her parents' home. Other stories began to surface. They had seemed like nothing but the innocent eccentricity of a smart but restless mind, but now they were sinister; school friends recalled the jewellery she had warned them not to touch lest it caused them harm and people remembered her repeated screenings of *The Believers*, a film about a cult that practices magick to gain wealth. Her friends only reconsidered in hindsight the moment that she stood up after a screening and spoke in a strange voice of occultism. She had interests in sacrificial magick and was with the cultists when she was found. If she

had ever 'looked behind the curtain' to see what Constanzo was really like prior to her arrest, she'd immediately closed her eyes again afterwards. Home was where her dark imaginings were and she was trapped there – she'd never really been away.

Sara was found not guilty on the charge of murdering Constanzo himself but she was initially sentenced to a six-year term for criminal association. She was subsequently sentenced to 62 years in prison for her part in the cult's other multiple murders. 11 years later, she released *Me Dicen La Narco Satanica*, a book detailing her side of the story. She has always maintained her innocence of the murders. She remains in prison where she continues to practice Santeria to this day.

A key aspect of belief is that the believer is participating for 'the right reasons', whether it is for self-development, the greater social good or just because they believe there is a force out there that is compelling them to do so. What has been left out of many reports is that the burned Narcosatanica ritual shack was subsequently blessed with a purification rite – a series of hand signals together with the sign of the cross and lashings of white powder. It was designed to evict the evil spirits that resided there and replace them with the protection of another invisible force – the Christian God. In other areas, crime scenes are made safe by police tape. We all have forces in which we choose to place our faith. It's just that some, such as the law, work better than others.









# LESBIAN VAMPIRE KILLER

AS THE SMOKE CURLED FROM HER CIGARETTE, TRACEY WIGGINTON WATCHED THE MAN SHE'D CUT UP DIE, SLOWLY LICKING THE TASTE OF HIS IRON BLOOD FROM THE POINTS OF HER TEETH... OR DID SHE?

WORDS DR CHARLIE DOUGHTON

**I**n days when people believe in gods and the practice of witchcraft is part of belief systems shared by many and protected by law in some countries, is it possible that vampires exist? This was the question concerning the trial of the so-called Lesbian Vampire Killers. Led by Tracey Wigginton, the four women were accused of conspiring in the murder of Edward Baldock in Brisbane, Australia on 20 October 1989. It was alleged that Tracey convinced Lisa Ptaschinski, Kim Jervis and Tracey Waugh that she, Tracey Wigginton, was a vampire who must ingest blood to exist. She also apparently had the power to control minds for good measure. Was she a vampire? Did her friends believe she was a vampire and, frankly, what impact did this have on how the murder was perceived?

## FANGS AND ROMANCE

Vampires, if you go by the movies, are generally dudes or dishy ladies with pointed teeth who don't do well in sunlight. With roots in Gothic writer Bram Stoker's tale of *Dracula* and inspired by historic warlords, they are considered supernatural. They have heightened senses, live on blood and are supposed to be devastatingly alluring, as Tracey and her acquaintances found out.

Dust from the Brisbane road glittered in golden diamond spikes hurled up by little gusts of wind at the roadside bar. Inside, four women raised champagne glasses in a toast to death itself, slowly licking the sweet nectar from their thirsty lips. They had brought their knives and were prepared.

The apparent leader was tall and sturdy; she seemed to loom over them. Her drop-jawed high guffaw, complete with a spray of acne (visible in photographs from the time)

**LEFT** A small bundle of cloth shields Baldock's body from the blithely balmy glade as crime investigators catalogue the scene.



may have seemed more like bared teeth and gaping maw with a Hammer-horror style splash of blood on her chin for good measure. Though the women had only known her a short time and Lisa had only been her lover for two weeks, they supported her and she needed to feed. The four figures gathered into their carriage and scuttled across the roads of Brisbane, hunting through the parks for lone figures they could overcome.

On this occasion, however, the watch-lords of the night did not proffer. There was neither snivelling minion nor cowering damsel to pounce on. It was a drag. They were in danger of turning back into a group of bored girls in a motor, squinting for magic through the mozzie clouds of Kangaroo Point with the car's engine reminding them how very real the world outside of their heads actually was.

Edward Baldock fell victim to their determination to live out their fantasy. They found him hanging off a lamp post. He'd had a few drinks and was, as the locals say, shickered. A happy chap with a wife, a flock of children and a job at the council, he'd been having the time of his life playing darts with his mates and was waiting for a taxi home. When a car full of apparently friendly, frolicky young ladies offered him a ride, well, why wouldn't he? He was driven to his doom with Prince's *Batdance* playing on the stereo. After penetrating his body with the blade of a knife given to her by Lisa, Tracey watched him bleed to death.

The murder was uncovered not by a hue and cry to follow a fighting fiend into the bush, but because Baldock's body was found with a bank card in his shoe marked in the name of one T A Wigginton. The knives used to kill the man had been roughly cleaned and were recovered from accomplice Kim's kitchen, searched after Wigginton was interviewed by the police.

## THE LADY IS A VAMP?

In everyday circumstances, someone in a cape announcing themselves sire of 'Drac' would be met with derision (or perhaps the invitation to make like a bat and flap off) but acolytes – people who believe in you – make all the difference. It is possible that Tracey's friends did believe that Tracey was a vampire. This is because, as Professor Mark Griffiths has commented, vampires exist. It's a case of definition and he has studied them for years. Unlike Hollywood's supernatural scoundrels, they are simply people who drink, or are aroused by, blood. It's really no different to people who are stimulated by the idea of semen and porn's notional money shot. It's just bodily fluid, and Tracey was said to buy it from the butcher.

Supernaturally speaking, Tracey and the girls were part of the Australian Gothic Swampie culture and had a shared interest in the witchcraft and occult – the so-called 'Satanism' spat out by the case's press clippings. One detective noted with some derision that Kim had a "montage of photos of various cemeteries" and that "the group appeared preoccupied with death". Lisa and the other accomplices may have found hanging out with the charismatic Tracey a powerful mental – you might say psychic – stimulus. After all, if your leader's going to claim to be able to do things, sooner or later they're going to have to prove it. Even doing something slightly out of the ordinary seemed proof enough, and Lisa said that she had already cut herself to provide the blood and that Wigginton had happily taken her fill. The sheer force of Wigginton's self-belief may have made it harder for the other girls not to comply with her requests



**ABOVE** The park next to the Brisbane River at West End, Brisbane, where Edward Baldock was taken by Wigginton and murdered

and they may have considered her force supernatural as a result – Lisa later said Wigginton could read her mind. Faced with the difference between a mind-controlling, violent blood-drinker and an overbearing blood-fetishist prepared to commit violence, the distinction of what makes a vampire may have seemed muddy to the friends indeed.

Lisa was also impressionable. She had a history of drug overdoses and would purposely harm herself as a physical outlet for her poor mental health. In the five years before the murder, she'd been hospitalised 82 times. That she told a court psychiatrist, "She, Tracey, dominated me more than anyone has in my life," says a lot. Notice that she didn't simply state how much she was dominated, but that Wigginton dominated her "more" than "anyone else", suggesting her submissiveness in relationships was frequent. Cutting yourself during intimacy has been discussed by sex educators as potentially healthy when the person being cut controls the situation, but Lisa's testimony suggested that she was providing the blood because she felt like she had to. Whether or not all the accomplices participated in the murder because they felt they had no choice was to be a key part of the prosecution.

## SEE NO EVIL

The alleged accomplices stated in court that they hadn't believed that Wigginton would commit the crime and were





Dapper with an easy grin and notable lack of worry-lines despite his age, Edward Baldock was the council worker Wigginton murdered

## 5 MINDS, MEMORIES AND MURDER

WIGGINTON'S VIOLENCE WAS BLAMED ON HER NOT-SO WILFUL RESPONSE TO ABUSE – THE DEVELOPMENT OF MULTIPLE PERSONALITY DISORDER

Wigginton, aged 24 at the time of the murder, was diagnosed with Multiple Personality Disorder and was said to have five different personas. One was Bobby, a butch, man-hating lesbian that protected the other personalities of Tracey as a child, an insecure adult and an impassive witness to her life. Bobby was the murderer, but why? Tracey said she had suffered a traumatic background including being raped by her grandfather and beaten by a haridan grandmother. In a bizarre switch of Albert Bandura's Bobo doll experiment, Bobby butchered Baldock as revenge for the abuse Tracey had suffered. Bandura had found that children learned aggression by copying and would attack the Bobo dolls after witnessing violence, literally play-acting their emotions out in a context they considered socially appropriate. The fantasy of Baldock as the stand-in for her abusers and of Bobby as her own double allowed Tracey to see the crime in an emotionless way. She later told journalist Ella Riggert: "Once I started I couldn't stop. I couldn't see Mr Baldock – I kept seeing my grandmother, my grandfather, my mother, my father and all the people in my life who had hurt me".

caught off guard when she did. They also said they were brainwashed. You could see why – newspapers reported that the court heard that Wigginton avoided sunlight and mirrors and boasted of being able to "make people disappear except for their eyes," to use Lisa's phrase. This would sound far-fetched coming from a child, let alone an adult. It's almost too daft to laugh at.

But what of Wigginton? It is one thing to believe a fantasy in the privacy of your head, but it's quite another when folks take what you're saying seriously. It could even suggest that the fantasy is not in itself beyond belief and may, therefore, be within the realm of the possible. You'd want to believe your own hype.

"The shell of a volcano", all non-human unstoppable force, was how Wigginton described herself after the murder. She went on: "You think nothing. Nothing goes through your mind. There is no emotion, just blind fury". Ridding the body of emotion is perhaps seen here as allowing the body to become pure force, some part of the cycle of birth and death beyond individuality. Wigginton said, "I can still smell the river – it was really salty smelling – the smell of blood.

**“NEWSPAPERS REPORTED THAT THE COURT HEARD THAT WIGGINTON AVOIDED SUNLIGHT AND MIRRORS”**



# VAMPING IT UP?

AS WIGGINTON ALLEGEDLY CLAIMED TO BE A BLOOD-SUCKER, WE SPEAK TO PROFESSOR MARK GRIFFITHS ABOUT VAMPIRE FACT AND FICTION

## What is vampire fetishism?

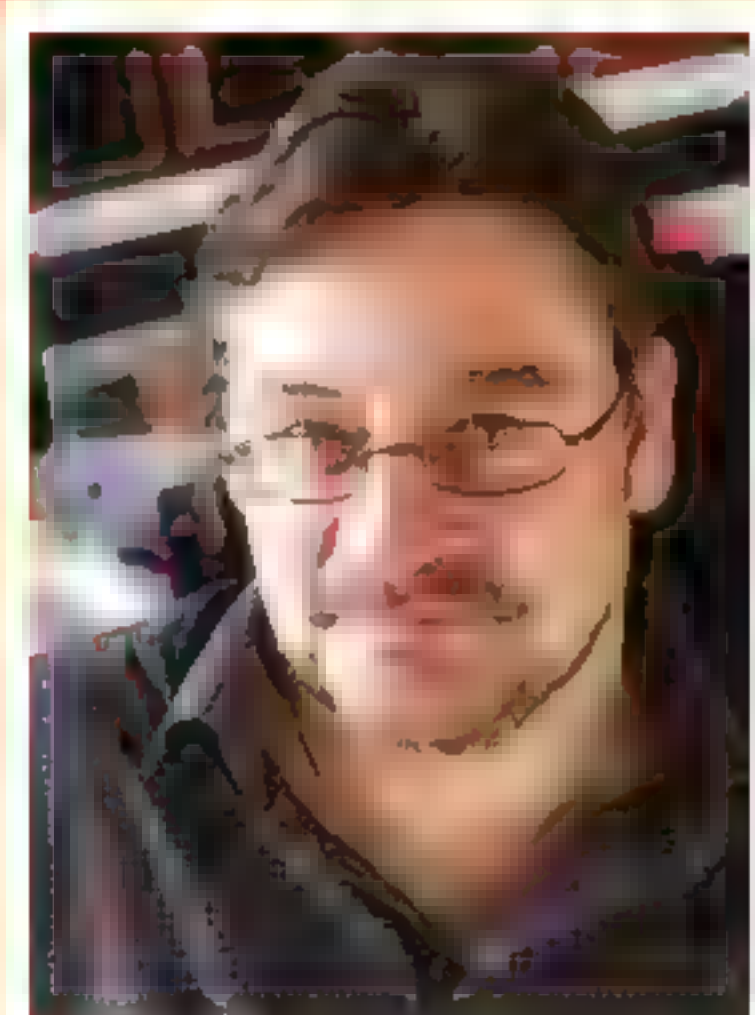
Sexual arousal, pleasure and excitement from the act of drawing blood from a living object (typically human, but [it] could be an animal). There are overlaps with sexual cannibalism (in which blood is consumed but the sexual focus is the eating of human flesh). Other related conditions have been documented, such as odaxelagnia (deriving sexual pleasure from biting), haematolagnia (deriving sexual satisfaction from the drinking of blood), and haematophilia (deriving sexual satisfaction from blood in general), and auto-haemofetishism (for example, deriving sexual pleasure from sight of blood drawn into a syringe during intravenous drug practice).

## What causes it?

Vampirism is rarely a single clinical condition, and may or may not be associated with other psychiatric and/or psychological disorders (e.g. severe psychopathy, schizophrenia, hysteria, and mental retardation). There are also cases where pre-existing medical conditions (such as anaemia) may be a factor. However, among consenting adults, it is not a mental illness at all, just a non-normative sexual preference. Furthermore, it may or may not necessarily include sexual arousal. Only vampire fetishism would include sexual arousal.

## How does real-life vampire fetishism compare to the images of vampires that we see in popular culture?

Vampire fetishism and vampirism are two different things because some individuals consume their own blood or others, without any sexual connotation whatsoever. Most people's perceptions of vampires arise out of films and books, so their view of vampires are likely to feature humanoid beings with fangs that bite into the necks of unwilling victims and suck out their blood. The motivation to drink blood in most fictional portrayals of vampires are non-sexual (although the victims may be attractive women). Real life cases of humans with vampirism are unlikely to have fangs and the blood may be drunk from a receptacle rather than the person direct. There is little crossover between vampires in popular culture and those that have the condition in real life.



## BIO MARK GRIFFITHS

Professor Griffiths has researched behavioural addiction for over 30 years. He has published five books, 150 book chapters, and more than 650 research papers on topics including gambling, video gaming, sex and cyberpsychology. His research has won 18 national and international awards.

the smell of metal that had been left to rust in the rain". All seeing. All feeling. The emphasis on smell calls to mind the human-animal hybrid that features in so many of the *Dracula* retellings. It suggests being apart from human civilisation trapped in our jobs and cars. It suggests the potential to escape both danger and judgement. It suggests that the evocative imagery both here and in the greats of Gothic literature hints that if escape is possible, urges should be obeyed even though they eschew morality and logic.

This may not just be the view of a few eccentrics but indicates how the trial unsettled Australian society. If we believe in God, the Devil or any other unseen forces, may we not also want to believe in our own potential super-nature? Ron Hicks' book *Inside The Mind Of The Vampire* asks whether Tracey was "the first vampire for 300 years – or the first ever?" While this is obviously partly a sales pitch, was this seen as something we could actually become? The police themselves were sure that she had drunk from the crater she had created in her victim's body. As horrifying a thought as it is, some may want to believe that humans could become monsters if we commit the unthinkable. The press, paradoxically, seemed to will Tracey on in her self-belief as well as chastise her.

## ESCAPE FROM TRAIL

The physical evidence against Tracey and witness statements of her friends was damning, though she denied all the blood-drinking and other activities of which she had been accused. What's more, she was evaluated as having Multiple Personality Disorder while under investigation. Her psychiatrists persuaded the court to allow her to appear in absentia owing to the trauma they felt the experience could cause her. As she had little memory of the murder, the medical team even suggested one of her alternate personalities planted her bank card in Baldock's shoe to set her primary identity up for arrest in the first place.

Tracey was nevertheless declared fit to plead. Her MPD diagnosis was seen not as a sign of insanity but as a mechanism she had developed to help her cope with childhood abuse. It was even discussed by academic Belinda Morrissey as being a chance to see Wigginton with sympathy as the justice system had failed to protect her. That said, sympathy does not safeguard citizens from being stabbed so many times that they are nearly decapitated, head held on only by the spinal cord, as Baldock's was. Tracey was sentenced to life in prison.

## MANNERS, MORALS, MODERNITY

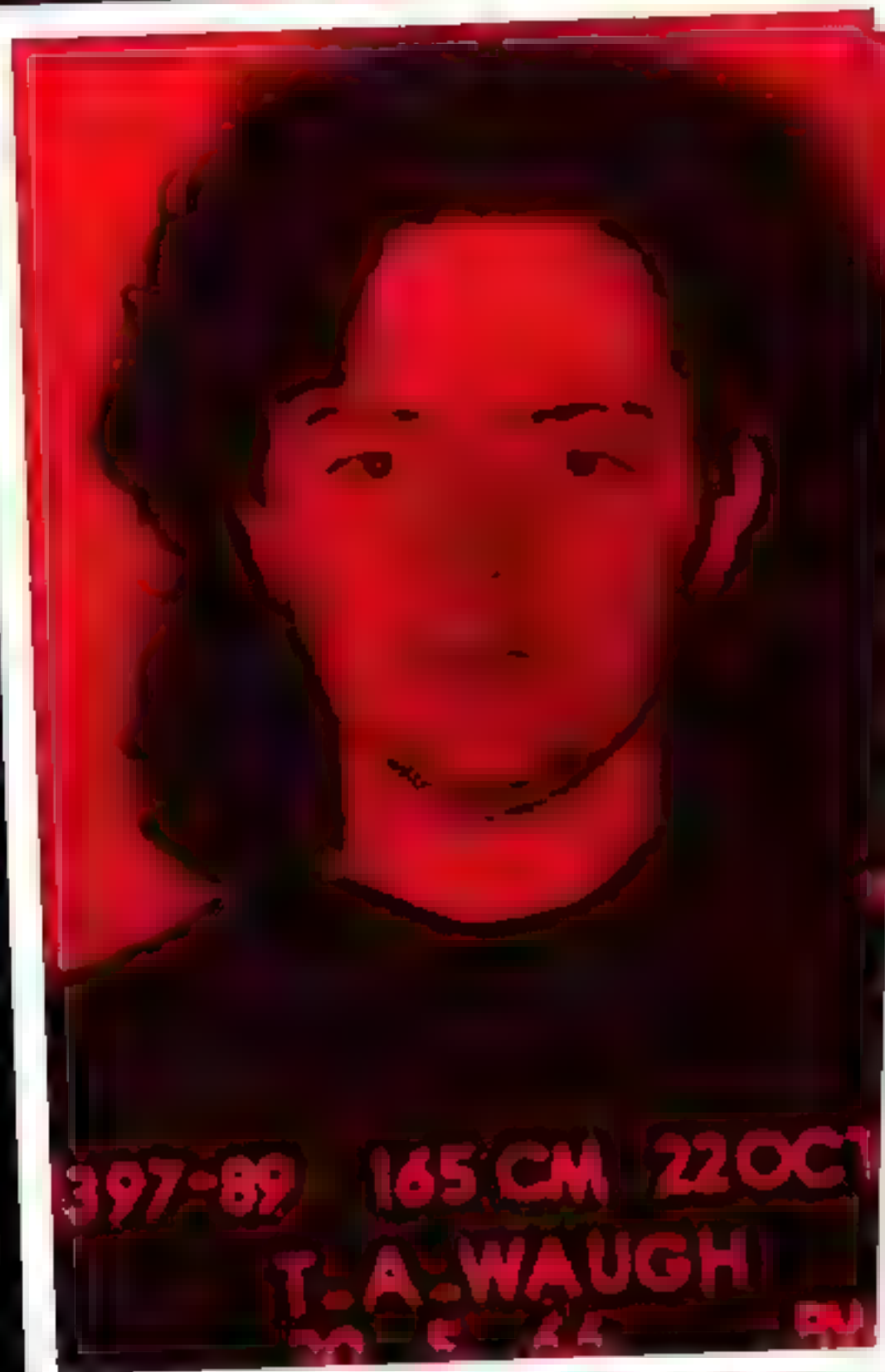
Lisa Ptaschinski was jailed for life for murder and Kim Jervis for manslaughter as she had acted as bait for the victim. Tracey Waugh was a little different. She was noted in documentaries very differently to the other 'Lesbian Vampire Killers' during the trial. While there was never any suggestion that Waugh participated in the actual murder, she was involved in the planning and was in the car when Baldock was taken. She didn't try to stop the crime. Crown Prosecutor Adrian Gundelach stated that during the trial,

**“THE TRIAL SEEMED MORE ABOUT PASSING JUDGEMENT ON PEOPLE WHOSE LOOKS AND BELIEFS WERE DIFFERENT TO THE NORM”**

**RIGHT** Tracey Wigginton left her victim to die, a mass of blooded hair, grapple marks and a distressed shirt cuff

**MUGSHOTS** Wigginton and Ptaschinski were convicted of murder, Jervis was convicted of manslaughter. Waugh (lower left) was cleared of all charges





she wore "a pretty frock and her [long] hair done neatly. She looked young", a smile on his face in apparent approval. Waugh was complying with social norms by looking feminine and innocent in court. She was acquitted and walked free. The trial, as those screaming "Lesbian Vampire Killers" headlines suggested, seemed more about passing judgement on people whose looks and beliefs were different to the traditional norm. It seemed more about guarding against a representation of 'evil' than it was about getting justice for the dead man himself.

Tracey Wigginton and her accomplices have all since been released from prison, Tracey with 31 parole conditions. Perhaps the sole truth about the case was, in the end, uttered by Tracey herself. It is poetic in its simplicity and warning: "Murder is a terrifying experience – it's extremely scary to have that much power. It's playing God with life and death. Nobody should have that sort of power... but we all do." If you believe that human life is sacred, it's a power that should never be used.



**ABOVE** Released from prison, Tracey's youthful style contrasts with her crutches. She was freed from the bars but her actions ensure constant scrutiny

© Alamy; Shutterstock



# Bizake Brainwashing





**34** **BLACK METAL MURDER**

THE BLOODY LEGACY OF NORWAY'S  
MOST EXTREME MUSICAL SUBGENRE

**42** **MONSTER MORMON MOTHER**

COULD RELIGION CAUSE A MOTHER TO  
SACRIFICE HER OWN CHILDREN?

**50** **THE KIDNAPPING OF  
PATTY HEARST**

A BRAINWASHED BANDIT OR SOCIALITE GONE BAD?





# BLACK METAL MURDER

THE BLACK METAL SCENE OF THE EARLY 1990S BOTH CREATED SOME OF HEAVY METAL'S MOST EXCITING MUSIC AND RESULTED IN THREE TRAGIC DEATHS. HERE IS ITS FULL, BLOODY LEGACY

WORDS JAMES MCMAHON







**T**he shop was so dark you couldn't see your own hand stretched out in front of you. Burning candles made it feel more like a crypt than a store. The windows were blacked out. The walls were covered with the same dank, gloopy paint. Upon them hung a variety of medieval weapons and a few posters advertising metal shows. Out front, on the door to the street, the word "Helvete" was painted in blood red. This was the Norwegian word for Hell, descended from the Norse 'Hels Viti', meaning 'Hell's Punishment'. In time the name would come to be prophetic.

In the window was a tombstone made out of polystyrene. In the basement the words "Black Metal" were daubed upon the walls. This was a phrase lifted from the title of the really rather silly but hugely influential British band Venom's second album. Everyone who frequented or hung around the shop used it to describe this new kind of heavy metal they were all so influential in creating. Raw, brutal, fast – but actually quite beautiful in places; glacial, in thrall to nature and old history.

Legendary British music writer Paul Elliot was working as news editor of the British rock bible *Kerrang!* at this time. Excited by the music they were hearing lurch out of the scene that revolved around the shop, fascinated even more by the rumours of bad behaviour that were surrounding the music's creators, on 27 March 1993 the weekly magazine decided to share the story of what was happening in Norway via their magazine cover. "Arson... Death... Satanic Ritual..." roared the strap. "The Ugly Truth About Black Metal".

"Looking back on it now, it was the most shocking story ever featured in *Kerrang!*" remembered Elliot. "What was going on made for good copy for the magazine and the bands benefitted from the exposure we gave them. Our story was sensational but not to my mind sensationalist given the seriousness of the crimes committed. Some great music came out of that scene and era. But it will always be remembered for the insanity and brutality of what those impressionable young men descended into."

Without Helvete, there is no black metal. The Oslo record shop was where 'The Black Circle' or the 'Black Metal Inner Circle' would meet. A silly club name, more



**ABOVE** Dead (left) and Euronymous in full corpse paint

## “EURONYMOUS WOULD BE FOUND... STABBED 23 TIMES IN THE HEAD, NECK AND BACK. COUNT GRISHNACKH WAS RESPONSIBLE”

**RIGHT** Øystein 'Euronymous' Aarseth was at the centre of the black metal scene, until his murder on 10 August 1993

**BELOW** A young Varg Vikernes, on trial. He would later be sentenced to 21 years in prison, the maximum punishment in Norway

ominous than it sounds because of the events that would transpire, it was a group that included members of the black metal bands Mayhem, Emperor, Burzum and Thorns. They all had an interest in Satanism, but really their core interest was in pissing people off. At the heart of it all was the shop's founder, Øystein Aarseth. He was better known as 'Euronymous' – guitarist, scene leader and a founding member in the band Mayhem. From the shop, Euronymous ran his record label. Its name? Deathlike Silence Productions.

Members of the group made Helvete their home from time to time: sometimes Euronymous, sometimes Emperor guitarist Tomas 'Samoth' Haugen. Emperor's drummer Bård Guldvik Eithun, also known as 'Faust', combined living and working in the shop. And then there was Varg Vikernes, also known as 'Count Grishnackh'. In 1991, Euronymous's band Mayhem found themselves short of a bassist. 22-year-old Per Yngve Ohlin, nicknamed 'Pelle' (but far more commonly 'Dead') would take his own life on 8 April of that year. It resulted in a reshuffling of the band's personnel. And so Count Grishnackh and Euronymous came to be in the same band, if not quite ever bandmates.

Just over two years later, on 10 August, Euronymous would be found on stairs leading to his apartment. He'd been stabbed 23 times in the head, neck and back. Count Grishnackh was responsible.

### THE COUNT COMETH

Born in Bergen on the west coast of Norway, Kristian Vikernes – as he was then known – came into the world on 11 February 1973.

When he was six, his family moved to Iraq. His mother worked for an oil company, his father for Saddam Hussein's government in Baghdad, developing computer programs. He had a brother, 18 months or so his senior. Once the family had arrived in the Iraqi capital, the Vikernes family quickly







learned that Bagdad's English school couldn't accommodate the young Kristian. But the Iraqi elementary school could.

Many years later, Vikernes would tell Didrik Schjerven, Söderlind and Michael Moynihan, authors of 1998's *Lords Of Chaos* (the seminal – if editorially biased – account of the early Norwegian black metal scene) that it was this experience that led him to become “aware of racial matters.” Corporal punishment was a fixture of his new school. One day in class, Vikernes called a teacher a “monkey.” He wasn't slapped. Empowered by a belief that the teachers “didn't dare to hit [him] because he was white,” the young Vikernes began to foster warped opinions about racial superiority. Allegedly, his father had a swastika flag on display at home. His mother – he again later told *Lords Of Chaos* – expressed concern her son might bring home “a black girl.” His parents separated when he was 11. Though he maintained a relationship with his mother that remains to this day, his father had faded from view long ago.

Vikernes's beliefs, and his interest in white supremacy, never went away. Before his involvement in black metal, it's

## WHAT IS BLACK METAL?

JONATHAN SELZER, REVIEWS EDITOR AT *METAL HAMMER* MAGAZINE, EXPLAINS THIS FORBIDDING MUSIC SCENE

“I think black metal means different things to different people, but for me, I'd say it's a link between the visceral and the sublime, rooted in something primitive but seeking to invoke something ancient and dormant in the modern world.

Purists will say only bands with a Satanic outlook can call themselves black metal. Its core sound is defined by speedy tremelo picking, rapid-fire drums, blastbeats and shrieking vocal, but most fans of the subgenre would agree that black metal has always been about more than the music. It's an attitude, value system and an unholy atmosphere you need true belief to attain. It's dedicated to nihilism and transgression, but transcendence too.

It's important to remember that what was happening with the Second Wave that people like Euronymous and Vikernes were part of, is it was a tiny scene at the time, so everything created ripples. As often happens in nascent scenes, there's a jostling to lay claim to its foundations and ideology, of everyone trying to outdo each other. Tie that into a scene entwined with nihilism, misanthropy and anti-Christian fervour, but one that also operated as a cult, and it was a tinderbox waiting to ignite.

The fact that black metal is very much alive 30 years or so later is a very powerful legacy, but the fact that it's also been very aware of its own roots has kept the narrative of metal as a whole alive, has proved that something essentially primitive can be expansive, and has also kept alive the idea of metal as both outsider music and musically charged.

I have been to Neseblod in Oslo, and if you're invested in black metal, it's a treasure trove. It's pretty claustrophobic, which adds to the atmosphere, but the sheer volume of albums and paraphernalia on display could keep you there for hours. Of course the basement with the ‘Black Metal’ sign is kind of like Stonehenge for metalheads. So much history surrounds it, and whether you're projecting it yourself or not, there's a power there that you can feel too.”

**RIGHT** Watain, a Swedish black metal band formed in 1998, prove that black metal is still alive, even if many of its founding fathers are not





## BURNINGS AND BOMBINGS

### A CLOSER LOOK AT THE ARSON THAT SET NORWAY ALIGHT

In 1992 and 1993, Norway was rocked by a spate of church burnings. On 6 June 1992 the 12th-century Fantoft stave church was destroyed by arson. The following year, another seven – in Oslo, Bergen and Vindafjord – were set alight. Varg Vikernes was found guilty for some of the attacks. Yet the burnings continued after his arrest – on 16 May 1994, on the day of Vikernes's sentencing, two churches were set alight, apparently in solidarity. It's said that by 1996, there'd been at least 50 churches burned, either partially or completely. The cover of Burzum's EP *Aske* (Norwegian for 'ashes') released in March 1993 is a photograph of the charred remains of the Fantoft stave church. It's never been confirmed, but it's believed the photo was taken by Vikernes himself.

The common belief was that Satanism was the motive behind the crimes. Heathen motivations would be a better description. "I am not going to say that I burnt any churches," Varg Vikernes told the authors of *Lords Of Chaos*, "but let me put it this way: there was one person who started it. I was not found guilty of burning the Fantoft stave church, but anyway, that was what triggered the whole thing. That was the 6th of June and everyone linked it to Satanism... What everyone overlooked was that on the 6th June, 793, in Lindesfærne in Britain was the site of the first known Viking raid in history, with Vikings from Hordaland, which is my county... They [the Christians] desecrated our graves, our burial mounds, so it's revenge." Mayhem's *De Mysteriis Dom Sathanas* album, a recording that features both Vikernes and his victim Euronymous, has on its cover a photo of Nidaros Cathedral. According to the 2007 movie *Once Upon A Time In Norway*, the pair had once planned to bomb the album sleeve's subject matter.

BURZUM  
Aske

ABOVE The cover of Burzum's EP *Aske*, released in March 1993. The photograph is of what remained of the Fantoft stave church after being set alight

“EURONYMOUS MADE NECKLACES WITH BITS OF PELLE'S SKULL. HE BEGAN GIFTING THEM TO MUSICIANS HE RESPECTED”

alleged that the adolescent dabbled in Norway's fledgling skinhead scene.

The young Vikernes loved *The Lord Of The Rings*. The name Grishnackh would in time be taken from that of an orc in J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle Earth. He enjoyed classical music and was a big fan of the Russian composer Tchaikovsky. At age 12 he discovered heavy metal: Iron Maiden were his favourites. He soon dug deeper into what metal had to offer. There was the Swiss extreme metal band Celtic Frost, while from Sweden there was Bathory, named after the notorious Hungarian noblewoman and alleged serial killer Elizabeth Bathory (according to the *Guinness Book Of Records*, the most prolific female murderer ever).

Aged 14, he began to learn the guitar. By 17 he was playing with the Bergen death metal band Old Funeral. Shortly after, and again borrowing from Tolkien (the word, taken from the "Black Speech" inscribed on "the one ring to rule them all",

can be translated as meaning 'darkness'), Vikernes formed Burzum, his solo musical project.

Vikernes had another hobby – burning churches. On 20 January 1993, a few months before the *Kerrang!* cover that sported a young Vikernes on it (his hair covering all but one eye, and in his hands a variety of weapons), one of Norway's biggest newspapers, *Bergens Tidende*, ran an expose on the recent bout of torched churches. They blamed Vikernes and other members of the black metal scene.

Later, Vikernes would claim that the whole thing was a promotional construct dreamt up by himself and Euronymous to promote Helvete and increase the popularity of black metal. He was briefly taken into custody. In February 1993, Norwegian music magazine *Rock Furore* published an interview with Vikernes in which he bemoaned the country's prison system: "It's much too nice here. It's not hell at all. In this country prisoners get a bed, toilet and shower. It's completely ridiculous. I asked the police to throw me in a real dungeon, and also encouraged them to use violence." And somewhere within all of this, Dead died.

### DEATH BECOMES HIM

Though he expired just years into his 20s, by the time he died it still seemed like 'Pelle', as his friends were fond of calling him, was well into mortal overtime. Bullied at school, the young Swede was allegedly declared clinically dead before he'd even arrived at puberty. It's said he ruptured his spleen after one beating.

The use of 'corpse paint' – black and white makeup used to create the impression





of being deceased and decaying—is now common among black metal musicians, but it's believed that Pelle was the first to ever wear it. "Dead actually wanted to look like a corpse," said Mayhem bassist Jørn 'Necrobutcher' Stubberud. "He didn't do it to look cool." Pelle took his desire to look deceased even further, burying his clothes before a show, then digging them up to wear them onstage. Mayhem drummer Jan Axel 'Hellhammer' Blomberg recalled that the singer once asked the band to bury him before a gig. "He wanted his skin to become pale."

Death was never far from Pelle's mind. Before joining Mayhem, his first band was named Morbid. Expressing his interest to join Mayhem, he posted Necrobutcher a package with a crucified mouse inside. Many in the scene believed Dead suffered from Cotard delusion, a rare mental illness that results in the affected believing they are already dead.

Pelle would mutilate himself onstage. He kept dead geese underneath his bed, and he once found a dead crow and henceforth carried it around in a plastic bag. He'd inhale the contents of the bag before performances. Then and now, Mayhem were notorious for decorating the stage of their live shows with severed animal heads.

Not that Pelle was the only bandmember obsessed with the macabre. Years later, incensed by a music journalist's comments, Euronymous's replacement Rune 'Blasphemer' Eriksen and Hellhammer drove to a slaughterhouse, procured a pig's head and placed it outside the journalist's house with a dagger embedded between the swine's eyes.

And then there was Euronymous himself. Where others in the scene became concerned about Pelle's fascination with death, it's alleged by many that Euronymous cultivated it. "I don't know if he even did it out of pure evil," former Mayhem drummer Kjetil Manheim said in the 2007 documentary *Once Upon A Time In Norway*, "or if he was just looking around." Somehow, along with Hellhammer, Pelle and Euronymous ended up living together in a house in the woods in Krakstad where Mayhem would practise. Frustrated by the proximity to each other, Pelle slept in the woods to get away from some synthesizer music he didn't like but Euronymous did. Euronymous's response was to charge outside and begin firing shotgun shells into the air.

Then on 8 April 1991, Pelle slit his wrists and throat. Then, just to make sure, he shot himself with Euronymous's shotgun. The note found with his body explained: he was "not a human. This is just a dream and soon I will be awake." It opened with the wry line, "Excuse the blood."

Euronymous found the body, but before calling the police, he walked to a shop and bought a disposable camera. Upon returning, he took photos. "Øystein called me up the next day," Necrobutcher told *The Guardian's* Chris Campion in 2007. "He says, 'Dead has done something really cool! He killed himself.' I thought, have you lost it? What do you mean cool? He says, 'Relax, I have photos of everything.' I was in shock and grief. He was just thinking how to exploit it. So I told him, 'Okay, Don't even fucking call me before you destroy those pictures.'"

He didn't. Euronymous kept them in a drawer at Helvete. Somehow one of the photos made its way to Euronymous's pen pal, Mauricio 'Bull Metal' Montoya, owner of Colombia's Warmaster Records. In 1995 it ended up on the cover of the bootleg Mayhem live album, *Dawn Of The Black Hearts*.

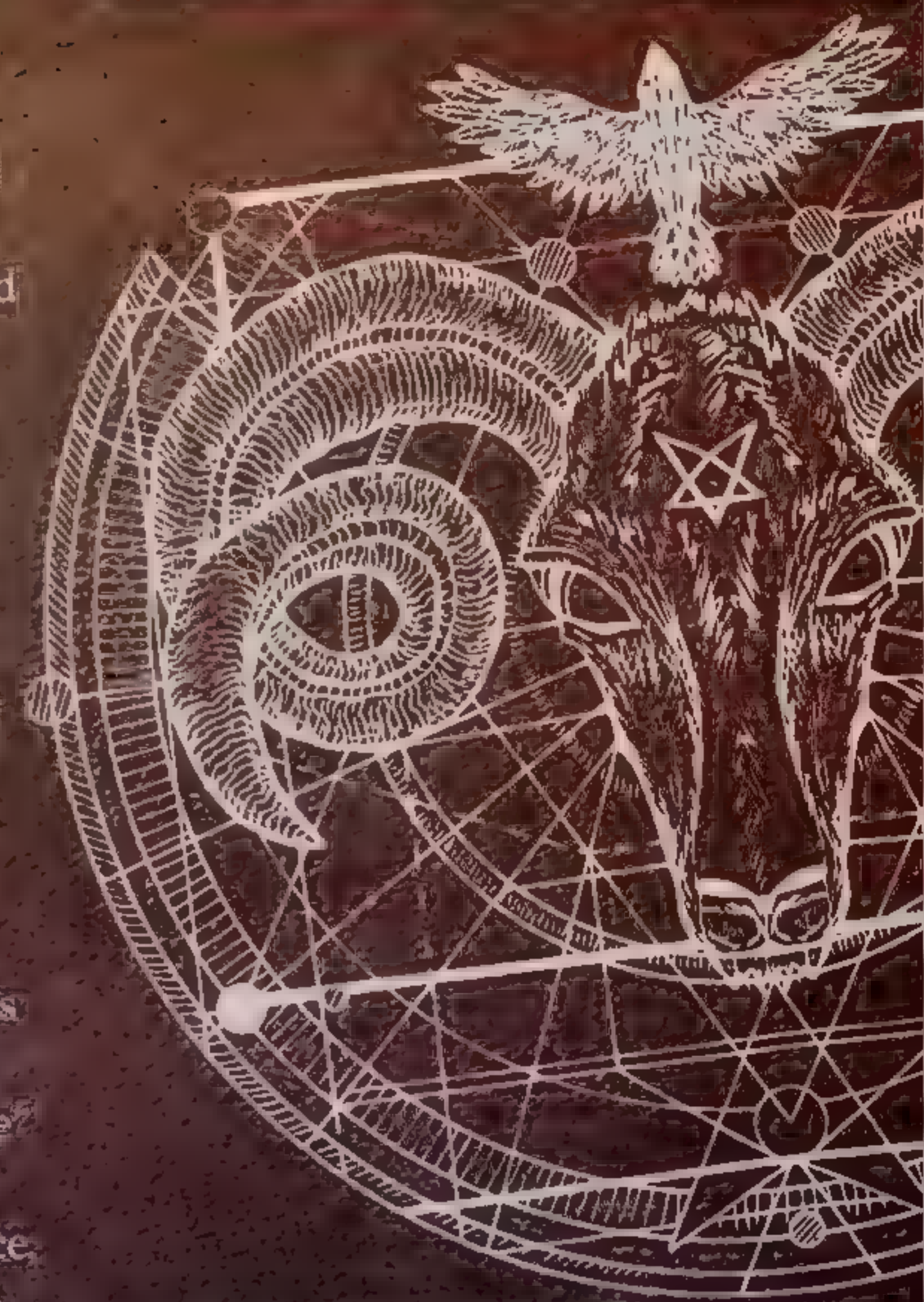
Euronymous made necklaces with bits of Pelle's skull. He began gifting them to musicians he respected in the scene. Disgusted, Necrobutcher left the band for the time being.

## HELL ON EARTH

Enter Varg Vikernes. "No one knew who he was when he first came to Helvete," said Faust about the blond, intense new arrival to the scene. "He came out of nowhere, this serious-looking guy from Bergen who doesn't drink alcohol but milk. It was a party scene. And he stood out from the crowd."

Faust, it should be noted, is a convicted murderer. While visiting family in Lillehammer, he stabbed a gay man named Magne Andreassen in the Winter Olympic Park 37 times, then kicked him

RIGHT Dead, smothered in makeup to look like a corpse, in a photo taken from Jørn Stubberud's *The Death Archives: Mayhem 1984-94*



ABOVE-LEFT Holmenkollen Chapel in Norway. Vikernes and Faust were tried and sentenced for committing arson upon it in 1992. Euronymous participated too, though death saw him escape that sentence. The church was restored in 1996

LEFT Founded in 1982, the anarchist, communist, socialist commune the Blitz House was allegedly a target for Vikernes







in his head repeatedly until he died. "This man approached me," Faust told *Lords Of Chaos*. "He was obviously drunk and obviously a faggot. It was obvious that he wanted to have some contact. Then he asked me if we could go up to the woods. So I agreed, because already then I had decided that I wanted to kill him, which was very weird because I'm not like this".

Initially it seemed like Faust had evaded punishment, despite confiding in Vikernes and Euronymous about what he had done. For a while, the open secret within the Helvete crowd concerning his crime, and that he'd seemingly gotten away with it, seemed to empower the group. With hindsight, many present within the scene, as well as outside commentators, have said this murderous episode – and the introduction of Vikernes to the circle – is key to understanding the exacerbation of the bloodshed to follow.

In 1994 Faust was sentenced to 14 years in prison. He was released in 2003 after serving nine years and four months.

Initially, Vikernes and Euronymous were close. It was an obvious union – if one with a shelf life. Vikernes and Euronymous were both hyper-enthusiastic about this new

**ABOVE-LEFT** Mayhem founding member Jørn Stubberud, aka Necrobutcher, is now Mayhem's only remaining original member, after reforming the band following the 1993 murder of Euronymous

**ABOVE-RIGHT** Vikernes during his trial in Norway in 1994, alongside lawyer Tor Erling Staff. Vikernes claimed he acted in self-defence, but a 14-day trial saw him given the maximum sentence possible under Norwegian law

**OPPOSITE-TOP** Vikernes was arrested at his home in central France in 2013 along with his French wife. He was suspected of planning a major terrorist act, although he was released without being charged 48 hours later for lack of evidence

music they were both at the nucleus of creating. Euronymous offered to release Burzum's music and offered him a role in Mayhem. Where they differed was that, while they both proclaimed to be evil – being so was a badge of honour within the scene – Vikernes had more claim to this title, and Euronymous was just pretending.

At some point all music scenes always end badly. Take any group of young, creative, developing people, throw in the issue of ego, and chances are fallouts will occur. Add weapons to the mix, nationalistic fervour, testosterone, mental illness, insecurity and a fledgling belief in Satanism, and it's a recipe for disaster. There are only two people who will ever know the specifics as to why Vikernes decided to murder Øystein Aarseth. One of them is dead. The other insists it was for reasons of self-defence. This claim is often disputed, but it should be noted that Euronymous was known within the black metal scene for sending death threats to anyone he had the slightest of disagreements with.

Vikernes actually claims that Euronymous intended to tie him up and torture him to death with a stun gun, and capture the act on video. "If he was talking about it to everybody and anybody I wouldn't have taken it seriously," he said. "But he just told a select group of friends, and one of them told me".

What is commonly accepted as fact is that on the evening of 10 August 1993, Varg Vikernes and Snorre "Blackthorn" Ruch – the guitarist in the influential Thorns, then staying with Vikernes after fleeing from the threat of being

**[[** THAT SAME MONTH SAW THE RELEASE OF MAYHEM'S ALBUM *DE MYSTERIIS DOM SATHANAS*, FEATURING THE VICTIM ON GUITAR AND KILLER ON BASS **]]**



**ABOVE** The original members of Mayhem on tour (circa 1990). Dead can be seen just behind Necrobutcher (second right)



committed to a mental institution – got in a car and drove from Bergen to Oslo, to Euronymous's flat. When Aarseth opened the door of his fourth-floor apartment at around 4am, he was in his underwear. There was an altercation and Vikernes stabbed Euronymous to death.

Blackthorn played no part in the killing. He stood outside and smoked. Yet, like many details surrounding the crime, there is debate as to how much the guitarist knew prior to getting in the car. Vikernes claims Blackthorn only came on the journey because he wanted to show Euronymous some new guitar riffs he'd written, and that he was "in the wrong place at the wrong time". Blackthorn claims Vikernes pressured him into accompanying him. "I was neither for nor against it," he later said. "I didn't give a shit about Dystem."

Vikernes claims the majority of Euronymous's wounds came from being punctured by glass broken during the fateful encounter. On the way home from Oslo to Bergen, Vikernes stopped at a lake, washed and discarded his bloodstained clothes.

"In all honesty it seemed a bit silly and comedic until the murder of the homosexual man in Lillehammer, and of Euronymous," said Kerrang's Paul Elliott. "Everything very quickly spiralled out of control."

## AND JUSTICE FOR ALL

Vikernes was arrested in Bergen on 19 August 1993. Faust and Blackthorn – who would receive eight years for being an accessory to murder – were also taken in for questioning. Everyone ratted on each other, everyone talked. Everyone but Vikernes, who viewed the fracturing of loyalties with disdain.

Inside Vikernes's home, police discovered some 3,000 rounds of ammunition and 150 kilograms of explosives. It has long been suggested that Vikernes intended to obliterate the anarchist, anti-fascist Oslo squat Blitz House, although he denies this. "I was getting [the explosives and ammunition] in order to defend Norway if we were attacked any time," he said during a 2009 interview with the Norwegian tabloid *Dagbladet*. The headline of that article declared, "The Count Regrets Nothing".

The trial began the following year, on 2 May 1994. Vikernes was represented by the eccentric Stein-Erik Mattsson (as well as working as a lawyer, Mattsson was once director of the Norwegian Curling Association and editor-in-chief of the pornographic magazine *Alle Menn*). Decades before the atrocities committed by Anders Breivik, Vikernes quickly became Norway's most notorious fiend.

On 16 May 1994, Vikernes received Norway's maximum penalty of 21 years imprisonment for the murder of Euronymous. He was also deemed guilty of committing arson on three churches, the attempted arson of a fourth, and for stealing and storing 150 kilograms of explosives. Vikernes only confessed to the theft and storage of the explosives. The same month also saw the release of Mayhem's album *De Mysteriis Dom Sathanas*, which features the victim on guitar and killer on bass. Euronymous's family had pleaded with Mayhem's drummer, Hellhammer, to remove Vikernes's bass tracks from the recording. He ignored the request. "I thought it was appropriate that the murderer and victim were on the same record," he said. "I put word out that I was re-recording the bass parts, but I never did."

Vikernes served 15 years of his sentence and was released on 22 May 2009 on probation. He now resides in France with his wife and children. Other than being convicted for inciting racial hatred against Jews and Muslims in 2014, he's lived a relatively low-key life.

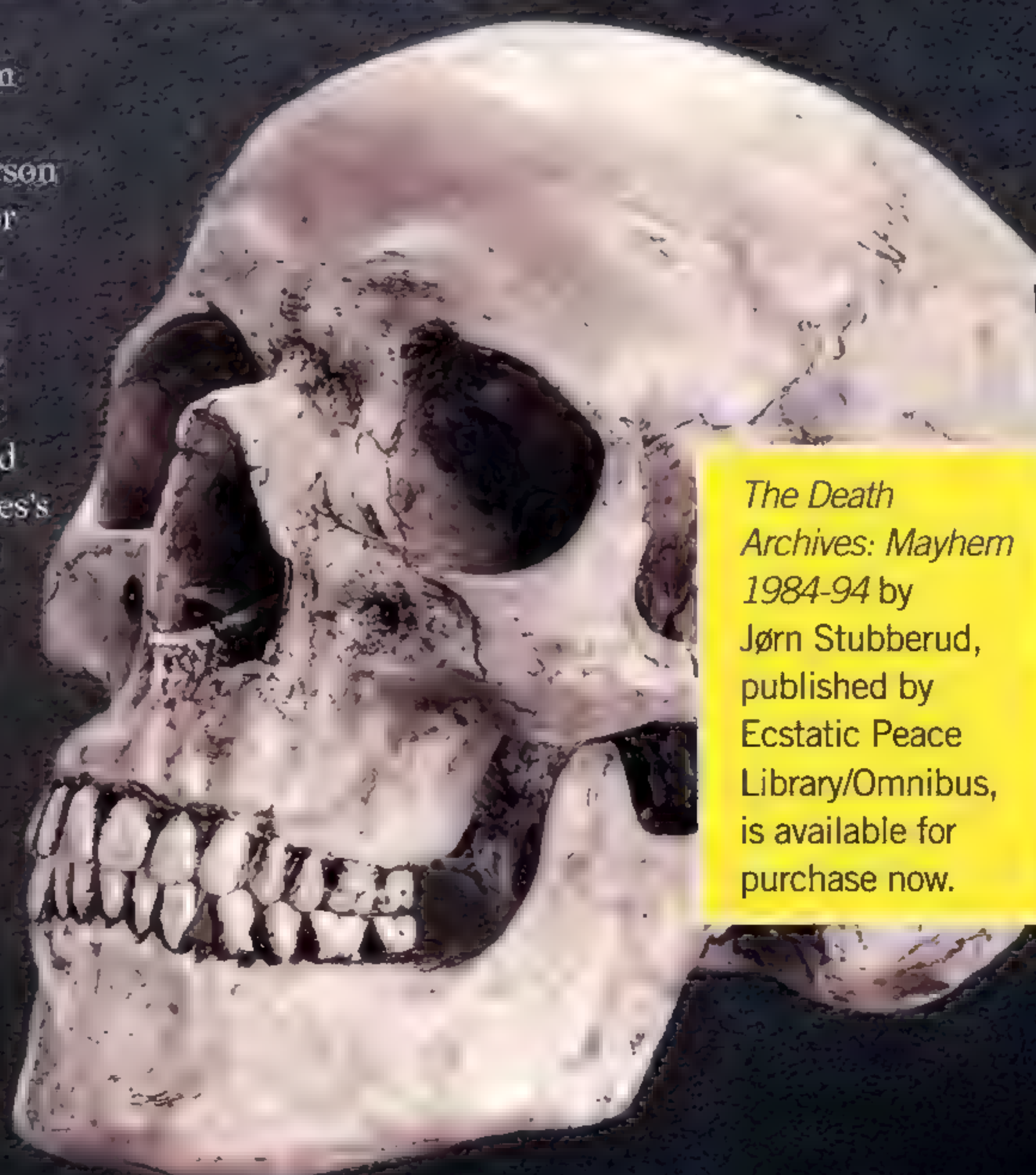


He blogs and makes music. In 2013 he was arrested on charges of planning to commit terrorism after his wife bought four rifles, but it was later found that she owned the correct permits. It seems Vikernes has too much to lose to be plotting mass murder. In 2015 he even released his own tabletop fantasy role-playing game, based upon "European values, geography, (pre-)history, mythology, traditions and morals".

In Oslo, Helvete still stands, though it's now called Neseblod. It's now as much a black metal museum as it is a record shop. On the wall hang props from Burzum photoshoots, a sheet dotted with Euronymous's blood. In an article written by the journalist Matt Bacon from *Metal Injection*, posted in 2016 upon paying pilgrimage to the site, the owner of the new shop had remarked, "All we are really missing is Dead's body to hang up with all the other stuff".



ABOVE Varg Vikernes in prison. At the end of 1994, Vikernes wrote a book entitled *Vargsmål* (in English, "Varg's Speech"), to 'defend' himself against "all the media lies".



*The Death Archives: Mayhem 1984-94* by Jørn Stubberud, published by Ecstatic Peace Library/Omnibus, is available for purchase now.





# MONSTER MORMON MOTHER

A CHANCE ENCOUNTER WITH A RELIGIOUS  
ZEALOT TURNED A SEEMINGLY LOVING WIFE  
INTO A FILICIDAL MONSTER HELL-BENT ON  
SURVIVING THE END-TIMES — EVEN AT THE  
COST OF HER OWN CHILDREN'S LIVES

WORDS DR. JOANNA ELPHICK



**LEFT** Dominated by a white  
tabernacle topped with a golden  
statue of the Angel Moroni, the city of  
Rexburg is home to around 41,000,  
the majority of whom are Mormon.



THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS  
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Lori Vallow wore two faces. Her public face was warm, empathic and beautiful. She had been brought up within the Mormon Church and, even as a child, read the scriptures daily, fervently applying them to her everyday life. However, her outwardly friendly and compassionate demeanour masked an ugly mixture of insecurity, manipulation and religious mania, a darker inner self that would one day be revealed to the world in the most horrific of ways. Even before her fateful meeting with Chad Daybell, the signs of her instability were beginning to peek through the beauty queen's shiny exterior. Gradually, the sinister side of Lori Vallow began to consume the happy wife and mother, until the facade finally shattered, leaving behind a woman capable of unthinkable callousness and brutality.

### A SERIES OF BAD CHOICES

In 1992, 19-year-old Lori Cox married her high school sweetheart. Within a year, she was arranging a divorce, claiming her husband, Nelson Yanes, abused her. Husband number two, William LaGioia, proved to be equally unsuitable. The pair married in 1995, but from the start their relationship was volatile. Lori regularly phoned the police, stating LaGioia had attacked her and threatened to kill her. The ensuing court case against her husband was dismissed due to lack of evidence. Although their son, Colby, was born in 1996, the pair ultimately divorced.

Lori and little Colby proceeded to live an unconventional, nomadic life until the single mother started dating an older man named Joe Ryan. The pair married in 2002 on the understanding that he would convert to Mormonism. Their daughter, Tylee, was born the same year, but their happiness was not to last. Ryan was hotheaded and often flew into rages. At the time, Lori seemed accepting of his vicious behaviour towards the children, but she was unimpressed by his lack of enthusiasm towards her religious beliefs. Meanwhile, she was moving away from traditional Mormonism into her own strange belief system. She was now convinced spirits were telling her what to do and that the soul of her



deceased sister, Stacey, had entered little Tylee's body. Once again, Lori started divorce proceedings and the children were removed from their family home.

Husband number four looked like the perfect fit. Charles Vallow was quiet, charming and, most importantly, he had the wherewithal to pay off Lori's considerable debts. The pair married in 2006. Since Charles was happy to attend the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints everything seemed to calm down and the children finally had a stable home life. At least for a while.

Out of the blue, Lori decided to accuse her ex-husband Joe Ryan of molesting her children. In return, Ryan

**ABOVE** Lori happily takes a selfie with JJ, knowing that in a matter of hours he will be asphyxiated by his uncle and unceremoniously thrown away in a bin bag

**BELOW** Tributes to JJ and Tylee flutter in the breeze as the community of Boise awaits news of the missing children





accused Lori of refusing him access to Tylee. An investigation failed to find any evidence against Ryan and Tylee reassured officers that her daddy had never touched her. Psychologists concluded that it was in fact Lori with the problem, harbouring a disturbing mindset based around extreme fanatical religious dogma. Lori was furious at their findings and told her brother, Alex, that it looked like Ryan would go unpunished. This, she declared, was unfair and went against God. Alex reacted exactly as Lori had hoped – with righteous indignation. Having waited for Ryan to leave his house, he attacked him with a Taser, causing Ryan to fall and break his wrist. Once again, Lori appeared comfortable with violence as long as it served her bizarre religious doctrine, and it seemed that, in her brother, she had the perfect loyal henchman.

## HE'S NO SPIRITUAL EQUAL

Charles Vallow's nephew was the black sheep of the family. Both he and his girlfriend were dropout drug addicts, so when she gave birth to a boy with demanding physical and emotional needs, they decided to 'get rid' of him. Initially, Charles' parents took the vulnerable boy in, but they weren't getting any younger, and it wasn't long before they found having a newborn in the house a considerable strain. Charles told Lori of

their situation, and shortly after the pair began adoption proceedings. Little JJ was to be the latest addition to the Vallow family. Despite protests from Ryan, who constantly fought Lori for access to his daughter, the Vallow clan decided to move to Hawaii. Here, Colby, Tylee and baby JJ could have more freedom and finally enjoy the stability that Charles offered them. Everyone marvelled at Lori's ability to be the perfect mother and wife, and it seemed that, at long last, the ex-beauty queen was content and satisfied. But looks can be deceiving, and beneath the veneer of respectability cracks were beginning to form.

**ABOVE** Daybell's children argued that their father would not stupidly hide the bodies on his own property and that the crime was carried out by Lori and her brother alone.

**BELOW** Weeks before the children vanished, Daybell said JJ's 'death percentage' was 99.99, while Tylee's was 0.13.

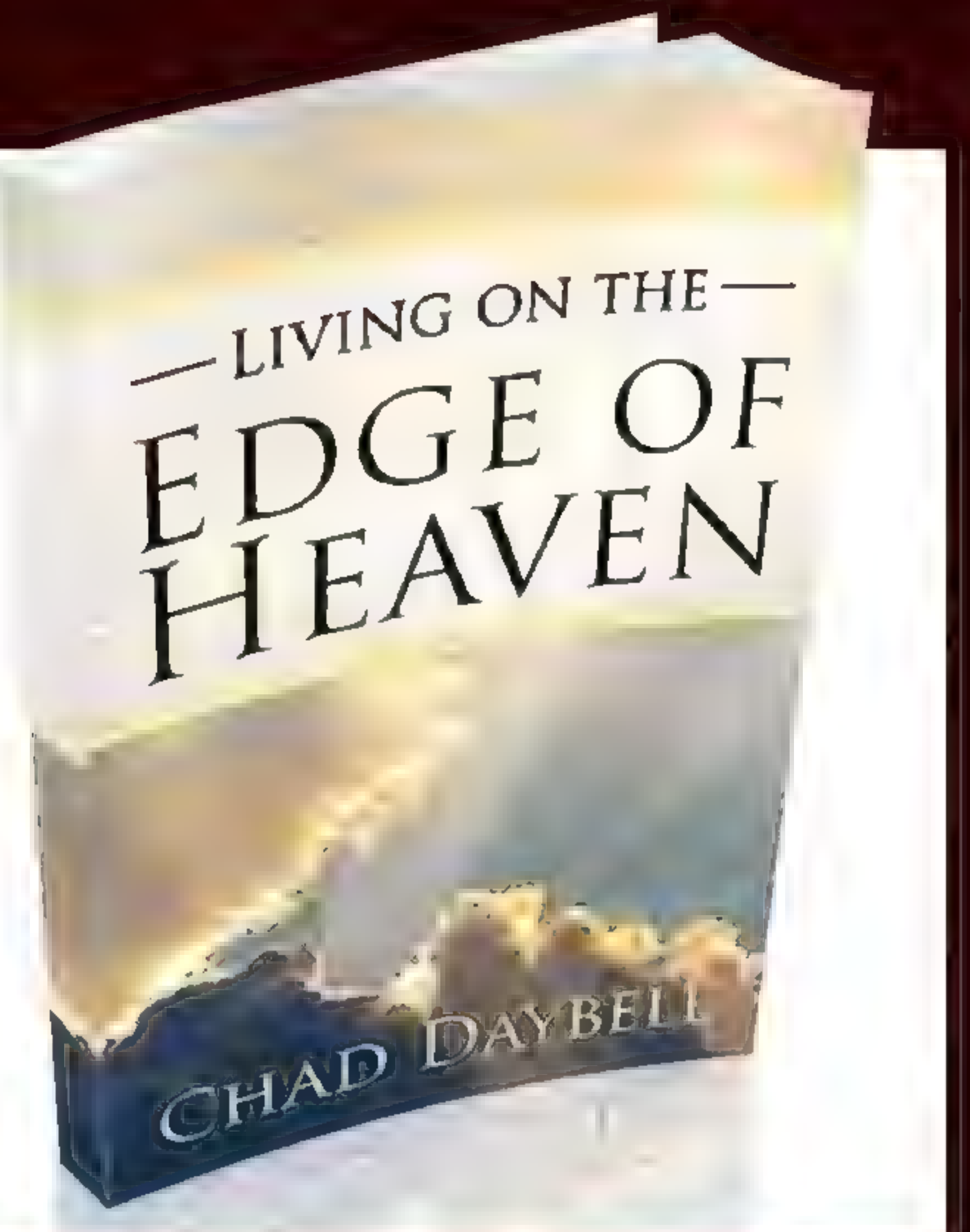




# THE DAYBELL SERMONS

DAYBELL'S BOOKS WERE THE RAMBLINGS OF A MADMAN, BUT HE CLAIMED THEY WERE PROPHETIC SERMONS

Chad Daybell's company, Spring Creek, published novels centred around various apocalyptic scenarios loosely based on the teachings of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Although the books were initially well-received, some were later banned by leading LDS bookstores. Lori inspired Daybell to delve deeper into his twisted ideology, while he encouraged her fanatical religious beliefs. Swept along by the cult dogma, Lori became convinced that Angel Moroni, an important figure in Mormon doctrine, had entered her and that she now had divine powers, including the ability to teleport. Not to be outdone by his premortal goddess lover, Daybell claimed to have the ability to see into the future, enabling him to pinpoint the exact date for the End of Days. He also used an owl necklace to determine dark spirits. It was with this cheap parlour trick that JJ and Tylee's fates were sealed.



## “LORI'S RELIGIOUS VIEWS WERE BECOMING EVEN MORE RADICAL THANKS TO A WEBSITE CALLED AVOW THAT DISCUSSED HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE END OF DAYS”

Although Charles had willingly joined in with the church meetings, Lori was dissatisfied with his efforts, confiding in a new friend on the island that he was “not her spiritual equal” and that he lacked a deeper understanding of the Latter-day Saints' core beliefs.

At the same time, Lori began reading a series of books by author Chad Daybell and listening to some of his intense podcasts concerning near-death experiences. It wasn't long before Lori was obsessed with the extreme notions discussed on the show. Although things seemed harmonious, the Vallow family suddenly packed up and left the island, returning to Arizona with barely a goodbye to the new friends they had made.

Lori's religious views were becoming even more radical thanks to a website called AVOW that discussed how to prepare for the End of Days, which she now believed was imminent. She had also convinced herself that she was one of the 144,000 souls that would be saved in order to witness the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Even so, she still feared the apocalypse and even suggested it might be easier to put her children in the car and drive off a cliff. Things had taken a very dark turn, and much worse was to follow.

Lori's descended further into madness when she met Mormon life coach Melanie Gibb, who invited her to attend PaP (Preparing a People) meetings. The fanatical LDS preppers only fuelled Lori's raging mania. It was Gibb who introduced Lori to Chad Daybell, the man who would accompany her on her journey into a warped world of death and depravity.



**BELOW** Lori is currently languishing in the Estrella Jail for women in Phoenix, Arizona. Built in 1991, it houses approximately 1,500 female inmates.





Police Department 2019-07-11 09:46:24

Claiming to have survived numerous near-death experiences, Daybell insisted that he was in regular contact with a multitude of spirits and, thanks to his ability to “peek beyond the veil”, he could differentiate between good and bad souls. As a result, he took it upon himself to ‘grade’ people from -6 (very evil) to +6 (angelic).

Meanwhile, Lori was thrilled to discover that the Book of Mormon could rationalise her ever-present murderous thoughts. The scriptures were clear: if someone goes against you three times, it is perfectly acceptable to ‘remove’ them. Armed with this knowledge, Lori set out to make contact with her religious author hero.

Their meeting was a cataclysmic joining of maniacal beliefs. Daybell took one look at the glamorous blonde and promptly set about convincing Lori that they had been married in a former life. Not only that, God had brought them together again so that they might be king and queen of the chosen ones destined to survive the End of Days. The problem was, they were both already married. Daybell was bored by his wife, and Lori had no time for her spiritually lacking husband. They both had to go.

Daybell could detect when an evil spirit had entered someone and turned them into a ‘zombie,’ and as luck would have it, Charles Vallow was one such monster. This meant it was God’s will to destroy him. Lori was fully on board with the notion and set about emptying Charles’ bank account. She also threatened to murder him if he got in the way of her spiritual journey. When Lori said he could keep JJ because she didn’t want him any more, Charles knew she had lost her mind. The

police were called and Charles confided in them his fears that he did not believe his children were safe. However, when Lori was interviewed by police she put on the charm and convinced them she was not only mentally stable but also an excellent mother. Charles filed for divorce and warned his lawyer that if he should suddenly die it would be down to Lori. He advised that her brother, Alex, would be the one to strike the blow. When he threatened to tell Daybell’s wife of the ‘spiritual’ affair, he unwittingly initiated the violent end that he had predicted. Under no circumstances was Daybell about to let Charles inform Tammy about his affair with Lori. As Charles had already foretold, Alex was sent to do the Lord’s business.

The murder was designed to look like a case of self-defence. Alex shot him in cold blood and then calmly rang the police, claiming that Charles had come at him with a bat so he shot him. He told the 911 dispatcher that he had attempted CPR, but the autopsy proved otherwise. No one had tried to help Charles Vallow in his time of need. Lori’s police statement was equally troubling since it did not match the story given by her brother. A closer examination of the crime scene revealed that the trajectory of the bullets did not match Alex’s story. This was no case of self-defence. This was murder.

**ABOVE** Images of the Chandler Police interview with Lori Vallow immediately after the supposed self-defence shooting of her husband, Charles, were released at her trial.

### THE ZOMBIE GULL

If Daybell and Lori were to finally be together and carry out God’s mission, they would need to clear their path first. Daybell’s wife, Tammy, was a major obstacle, and so were Lori’s children. Once again, Daybell consulted the divine spirits for guidance, only to discover that Tammy, Tylee and JJ had all been attacked by dark spirits and were now





zombies. Luckily for them, Alex had apparently been sent by God to protect Lori from the hordes of the undead that plagued her life.

In August 2019, Lori uprooted her children and moved to Rexburg so that she could be closer to Daybell. JJ's grandparents face-timed their little grandson on 10 August: it was the last time they were to see him alive. All subsequent requests to chat to JJ were ignored, and it wasn't long before the couple began to worry about his safety. Meanwhile, Tylee was becoming a nuisance. She missed Charles and found her mother's religious rants exhausting. Despite all this, the children had a fun day out at Yellowstone National Park with their mother and uncle Alex. Sadly, that same uncle had another day out planned for Tylee – one from which she would never return. Daybell had convinced Alex that the teenager was now a dark zombie and must therefore be destroyed.

The details regarding Tylee's last moments are still vague, but at some point after the family day out, Alex murdered Tylee under Lori's instruction and then set about dismembering her corpse. The pieces were gathered up and taken by Alex to Daybell's extensive property. Daybell had already dug a grave behind the barn where he buried his pets. Alex then proceeded to burn Tylee's body parts in a bucket, which melted under the heat. Her head was tossed in the grave, followed by the charred remains, and then the grave was filled in. When the job was completed the callous murderer drove into Rexburg for lunch. Such an exhausting morning had left him hungry.

Lori went about spinning lies and paving the way for her new life as queen of the chosen 144,000. She told friends that Tylee had left home to study at Brigham Young University's Idaho campus. She said that JJ was going to

# CRAZY CULT TALK

HER OWN WORDS HIGHLIGHTED TO THE JURY WHAT A FANATICAL KILLER HER TWISTED FAITH HAD MADE HER

**“ I CAME DOWN HERE TO BE A WARRIOR AND TO FIGHT ”**

19/10/18

During her first 'Preparing a People' meeting in Gilbert, Arizona

**“ AND I JUST SAY THIS IS THE TIME TO WARRIOR UP. HERE WE ARE. WE'RE GETTING STARTED ”**

26/11/18

Podcast debut

**“ YOU'RE NOT CHARLES. I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE OR WHAT YOU DID WITH CHARLES BUT I CAN MURDER YOU NOW WITH MY POWERS ”**

30/01/10

As reported to Gilbert Police by Charles Vallow

**“ JESUS CHRIST KNOWS NO ONE WAS MURDERED IN THIS CASE. ACCIDENTAL DEATHS HAPPENED. SUICIDES HAPPENED. FATAL SIDE-EFFECTS OF MEDICATIONS HAPPENED ”**

31/07/23

Sentencing statement

**“ WE R BOTH SO TIRED OF TAKING CARE OF DEMONS. WE ARE WEARY. PLEASE ASK THE LORD TO TAKE THEM ”**

AUGUST 2019

Text message sent to Chad Daybell

**“ FIVE KIDS AND NO MONEY AND HIS SISTER GETS EVERYTHING ”**

15/07/19

Text message sent to Kay Woodcock (Charles Vallow's sister)







live in Louisiana with his grandparents. Meanwhile, the grandparents were frantically trying to contact Lori so that they might see their grandson. The little boy was seen one last time by church members during a podcast recording. He was fast asleep in Alex's arms, snuggled up in a pair of red pyjamas.

During that evening, JJ woke up and, sensing danger, attempted to escape the clutches of his wicked uncle. Alex bound his hands and feet with duct tape and sealed his mouth shut so that no one could hear him scream. He then secured a white plastic bag over his head, suffocating his seven-year-old nephew before throwing him in a plastic rubbish liner. Once again, the corpse was buried on Daybell's property.

Tylee's 17th birthday came around and close family and friends sent good wishes to her mobile. They each received uncharacteristically brief responses in return. Everyone could sense something was wrong.

Due to his outrageous beliefs, Daybell was excommunicated from the LDS Church, a public rebuttal that did nothing to sway him from his bigger mission. Having predicted that Tammy would die in her sleep, no one was surprised when she did just that. A funeral was arranged at lightning speed, followed by Daybell and Lori's wedding less than two weeks later. But while the insensitive couple celebrated on the beach, local police were beginning to take an interest. Even more worryingly, no one had seen Tylee or JJ for around two months.

On 11 December, Tammy's hastily buried body was exhumed and, after a thorough autopsy, her death certificate was changed to 'under suspicious circumstances'. The following day Alex's body was discovered in his bathroom. Medics determined that although he had Narcan in his system (an anti-overdose drug) he did in fact die from a blood clot on his lung.

Lori could no longer rely upon her evil henchman to do her dirty business. Rexburg Police issued Lori with a court order to produce her children, but when she failed to meet the deadline she was arrested and charged with a multitude of offences.

Daybell was also charged with killing Tammy. By April 2020, police announced that they were investigating both Daybell and Lori for the murder of Tammy Daybell and were extremely worried about the safety of Tylee and JJ. Their worst fears were realised when the remains of both children were discovered on Daybell's property. Lori and Daybell were charged with the first-degree murder of Lori's youngest children in May.

### RELIGION ON TRIAL

Lori's religious ramblings meant that she was considered incompetent to stand trial, but by April 2022, after she had undergone restorative psychiatric treatment, the courts acknowledged competency and a trial was set for 10 April 2023. The biggest problem for the prosecution was the fact

**ABOVE** Lori claimed during her trial that Jesus asked her to leave heaven and return to Earth to complete "things I had promised to do before I was born"





**ABOVE** The pretty front yard in Salem, Idaho, was a perfect disguise for the depraved actions carried out by Daybell and Alex at the back of the property.

**ABOVE, MIDDLE** Police first searched Daybell's residence on 3 January 2020, but five months later, when evidence suggested the children had been killed, they returned and began a full forensic search of the land.

**ABOVE, RIGHT** Daybell supported his wife during her initial hearing in Kauai on 21 February 2020 for two felony counts for non-support of dependent children and desertion and three misdemeanours.

that although Lori and Daybell had masterminded the murders, it was the deceased Alex Cox who had actually carried out the heinous crimes.

However, the evidence against Lori was overwhelming. Despite various family members claiming Lori had been a loving mother who had been spiritually manipulated by Daybell, her general frustration at an over-exuberant JJ and a surly teenage Tylee suggested otherwise. Her equally cruel treatment of Charles also highlighted her true character. This was a woman who had used religious mumbo jumbo to justify her heartless actions.

Forensic experts told the jury of a strand of hair retrieved from the duct tape used to bind JJ. The partial DNA profile matched Lori's, proving she had been fully involved in the callous murder. The jury was also told of the percentage scale used by Daybell and Lori to denote how spiritually enlightened or 'dark' each individual was and, ominously, how close to death they were.

The fact that Lori continued to cash in vast sums in social security cheques intended for her children long after she knew they were dead further served to prove just how wicked and selfish she was. Kay Woodcock, Charles' sister, described Lori's fury when she discovered Charles had taken Lori off his life insurance policy and replaced her name with Kay's. Over the course of the six-week-long trial evidence was submitted showing just how greedy Lori was.

Having called over 60 witnesses, the prosecution rested its case. No witnesses were brought forward by the defence team. The jury returned a verdict of guilty on all charges relating to the deaths of JJ Vallow, Tylee Ryan and Tammy Daybell.

Lori now awaits a second trial in Arizona for the murder of her ex-husband Charles and the attempted murder of her niece's husband, Brandon Boudreaux, who refused to join their bizarre cult. Although the death penalty is now off the table, Lori will be spending the rest of her life in jail with no possibility of parole. Only she knows her motivation for carrying out such abhorrent crimes. She states she was doing God's work. The jury clearly didn't believe her.

Having watched his new bride narrowly miss a death sentence, Daybell must now wait for his own trial to conclude. The prosecution are calling for a capital sentence, and as the evidence stacks up against him, that might be how this tragic story ends.

**“THE JURY WAS ALSO TOLD OF THE PERCENTAGE SCALE USED BY DAYBELL TO DENOTE HOW SPIRITUALLY ENLIGHTENED OR ‘DARK’ EACH INDIVIDUAL WAS AND, OMINOUSLY, HOW CLOSE TO DEATH THEY WERE.”**







# THE KIDNAPPING OF PATTY HEARST

HEIRESS PATTY HEARST'S TIME AS A GUN-TOTING MILITIA MEMBER BOTH SHOCKED AND CONFUSED ONLOOKERS. WHO COULD HELP BUT WONDER IF SHE WAS A WILLING PARTICIPANT OR A BRAINWASHED BANDIT?

WORDS TANITA MATTHEWS

Standing in front of a flag of a seven-headed serpent, Patricia Hearst's stance is one of aggression. She is poised and brandishing a machine gun, but her face is completely devoid of emotion and rationale. The lights are on but nobody's home, some would say. Hearst claims that at the time of this picture, she was acting under the influence and persuasion of a left-wing terrorist group known as the Symbionese Liberation Army. Hearst's scandalous abduction when she was just 19 years old captured the nation as she turned from captive to comrade in a matter of weeks. Renowned psychiatrist Frank Ochberg, a pioneer in trauma science, told **Real Crime** that Hearst was the "poster child" for a psychological condition known as Stockholm syndrome, in which the victim feels positively towards her captors. However, others are sceptical, wondering why the "spoilt" heiress did not try to escape when she had both the opportunity and the means to do so. Instead, under the pseudonym Tania, Hearst became a gun-wielding mercenary until 19 months later when the FBI captured her. Hearst claims that she was threatened, raped and forced to turn rogue out of fear for her life, and although she was granted a presidential pardon some years later, the public still ponder as to whether Hearst was an "amoral" freedom fighter, a rebel with a cause or a victim of trauma that changed her beyond recognition.

## KICKING AND SCREAMING

Patricia Hearst's life before her capture was one of privilege and promise; she was an heiress to the Hearst kingdom of publishing, set up by her grandfather William Rudolph Hearst, the Rupert Murdoch of the early 1900s. Patricia was one of five daughters born to her mother Catherine, a regent at the University of California, Berkeley, and father Randolph, the president and editor of the cornerstone of his father's newspaper chain, the *San Francisco Examiner*. A rebellious child, she often clashed with her conservative mother, and this behaviour came to a head when, at 16 years old, when she fell in love with Steven Weed, her 23-year-old maths tutor. Two years later, the pair had moved in together in Berkeley and planned to be married the following year.

But on 4 February 1974, at around 9pm, Hearst's life would change with a knock at the door of her home near the Berkeley campus, where she was a junior student studying the history of art. There came a story from a damsel in distress who needed to use the phone because of car troubles downstairs, but when Hearst opened the door, two armed black men pushed through and beat Hearst's fiancé Weed semi unconscious with a wine bottle, forcing him to the floor while Hearst was gagged. One neighbour, hearing the commotion that was taking place, attempted to help the



couple but the intruders left him and Weed face down on the ground. They carried the heiress out of the apartment in her nightgown screaming “please, let me go” before loading their blindfolded and half-naked victim into the boot of a stolen convertible. From here, Hearst was taken to an apartment in Golden Gate Avenue and stuffed into a closet bound and blindfolded. “I was only spoken to occasionally when they wanted something. I was questioned by them continuously,” Hearst told *Dateline* interviewer Dennis Murphy. She also alleged that her kidnappers raped and beat her as well as mentally abused her. The SLA had a plan for Hearst that would bring them out of the shadows and into the limelight.

The SLA ideology opposed racism, sexism, ageism, fascism, individualism, competitiveness, possessiveness and “all other institutions that have made or sustained capitalism.” Their leader, Donald DeFreeze, had escaped from prison just a year earlier. The SLA formation was one of great contradiction: even though it was made up of predominantly female feminists, it was the men who were the domineering factor to their cause. Their anti-war ideology was in stark contrast to their military style of combat and confrontation.

Eight days after her abduction, the Hearsts received word from their daughter. Her voice, recorded on a cassette tape, sent her family and the rest of the world this message: “I’m with a combat unit that’s armed with automatic weapons, and these people aren’t just a bunch of nuts. They’ve been really honest with me but they’re perfectly willing to die for what they’re doing. And I want to get out of here but the only way I’m going to is if we do it their way.”

Hearst instructed her family not to look for her, as they would not only be endangering her but also themselves, and that her father was to do as they instructed and to do it quickly. Further communication also came from DeFreeze, who told the Hearsts: “Whatever happens to your daughter will be totally your responsibility and the responsibility of the authorities of which you represent.”

While many people hadn’t heard of the SLA, there were a few who had and who knew of DeFreeze, the dangerous individuals who affiliated themselves with him and the SLA. The kidnapping was deemed opportunistic, and Patricia was used as leverage in a political stand-off during which the SLA demanded that the Hearst family use their strong political influence to free two of their men who were facing life in prison for the 1973 murder of Oakland’s first black superintendant, Marcus Foster. DeFreeze was also suspected of being present during the shooting in which Foster was blasted eight times with hollow-point bullets packed with cyanide. It soon became apparent to the SLA members that their prisoner exchange could not be achieved despite the kidnap of the all-American heiress. Instead, they demanded a substantial and expensive food donation to the poor in a bid to win the admiration of under-privileged communities.

The SLA instructed Hearst’s father to donate good quality food to every person in the poorer communities throughout California, an outreach that would cost him \$400 million in exchange for his daughter. Her father immediately donated \$2 million worth of food to the poor of Bay Area. The handout was a spectacular fail, as riots broke out when the victim’s father admitted that he could not afford such a tremendous bill. This angered the SLA and they refused to release his daughter, calling Randolph’s gesture an “act of throwing a few crumbs to the people.”

It was time for the public to hear from Hearst once again, 59 days after her kidnapping. This addressing was to be the most shocking of them all. Hearst said: “I have been given



the choice of being released... or joining the forces of the Symbionese Liberation Army and fighting for my freedom and the freedom of all oppressed people. I have chosen to stay and fight.” Hearst denounced her name and took up a new identity, ‘Tania’ after a “comrade who fought alongside Che in Bolivia for the people of Bolivia.” Hearst later explained that she had been made to believe that if she was freed, the FBI would kill her, and that she chose to stay out of fear of life beyond the ‘protection’ of her captors.

### “I’M TANIA HEARST”

Days later, hidden cameras inside the Hibernia Bank in the Sunset District of San Francisco captured the first sighting of Hearst since her kidnapping 70 days previously. Dressed in a dark, heavy coat and dark trousers, she could be seen alongside four other women wielding semi-automatic rifles. DeFreeze was front and centre of the hold-up dressed in a long leather coat and a wide-brimmed hat with his gun in hand. The footage showed Hearst shouting commands to the frightened people caught in the middle of their bank job. “I’m Tania. I’m Tania Hearst,” one witness heard the heiress shout. Another said that Tania told them she would shoot the first “son of a bitch that moved or did anything out of line.”

The group moved with military precision, communicating via hand and verbal signals to one another. When they were done, they made a dash towards the getaway car parked down the street, with \$10,690 stuffed into their bags.

**ABOVE** Patricia Hearst told interviewer Dennis Murphy that during her time with the SLA she couldn’t even think for herself, and that DeFreeze instructed her not to think of being rescued because psychics would locate her

**ABOVE RIGHT** Despite wielding an M1 Carbine during her SLA debut just two months after her initial kidnapping, President Bill Clinton pardoned Hearst for the bank robbery conviction 27 years later





Hearst was held captive in a number of the SLA hideouts while they made their demands to her family, including this unassuming house

However, in a seemingly panicked state, they began to spray bullets at people in the street, seriously injuring two men.

FBI agents argued that Hearst was forced to comply at gunpoint with her captors. United States District Attorney James Browning filed the bank robbery charges and identified Hearst as a “material witness”. He issued a warrant in the absence of specific information detailing Hearst’s willingness to participate in the hold up. However, other FBI agents branded Hearst a “common criminal” and told the media she was “not a reluctant participant.” Hearst’s family were adamant that their daughter was a victim and was still a rescue mission worth pursuing, but had been warned several times what would happen should they try to infiltrate the SLA community. Following the robbery, another tape recording was delivered to the outside world via a local radio station. On tape, Hearst claimed that her gun was loaded and that “at no time did any of my comrades intentionally point their guns at me. As for being brainwashed, the idea is ridiculous to the point of being beyond belief.”

DeFreeze moved his nine-member army to Los Angeles shortly after, where they hid from authorities. In May, 18-year-old Tom Matthews came face to face with the SLA when they hijacked his van and handcuffed him to the ceiling after posing as potential buyers for his vehicle. When Hearst jumped into the van in a long coat and curly black wig, Matthews didn’t recognise her at first until the group introduced ‘Tania’. Hearst gushed about how she had been a willing participant in the Hibernia heist and how proud





Robert Blackburn, who was also shot by the SLA when they assassinated Marcus Foster in 1973, described them as "a pathetic, mediocre sort of after spasm of the best part of the 1960s"



she was of her comrades who had earlier escaped capture. A spur of the moment theft at Mel's Sporting Goods by married couple and dedicated SLA members Emily and Bill Harris led to an altercation. When the store manager followed the pair out and confronted them, a tussle between Bill and the shop owner flung Bill's gun to the floor. Hearst, sat in a van across the street, came to their rescue and forced the store manager behind a light post, spraying bullets at his front window, which allowed Hearst and the Harrises to drive away.

That evening, the SLA took Matthews with them hoping to meet up with the rest of their comrades, however, due to the heightened police presence, the other members failed to show. Matthews' family became worried that he had gone out for a 'test drive' and hadn't returned. His father suspected that the SLA had kidnapped his son, but the police thought nothing of an 18-year-old out after hours. Matthews escaped when the SLA hijacked a second car and tossed him the keys to his van – his 12-hour spree with some of the USA's most wanted criminals was over and he had survived. After he returned home to his hysterical parents at 7am, he told the police what had happened, but failed to mention Hearst's involvement in his kidnap. He told *Dateline's* Josh Mankiewicz that had he been given the opportunity to press charges against the SLA, he would have declined, feeling that they had not hurt him in any way. He added that he now knows how lucky he was to survive.

Evidence left at the scene of the crime at Mel's Sporting Goods was traced back to Emily Harris, a clue that would lead the police to their latest hideout. The next day, the police stormed a house in south-central Los Angeles and urged the members to surrender. Instead, a violent stand-off commenced. A suspected smoke grenade caused the building to catch fire, and DeFreeze and five of his comrades

attempted to make their escape through a crawlspace underneath the house, which caught fire. DeFreeze shot himself through the right temple with his pistol before his body perished alongside the others. As the bodies were pulled from the crumbling building, the question remained as to whether Hearst's body would be found among the six charred bodies pulled from the wreckage.

### RALLYING THE TROOPS

Prior to the raid in LA, Hearst and the Harrises had checked into a hotel close to Disneyland. Inside their room, they watched the stand-off unfold on TV just as everyone else in the USA had. Hearst later claimed that while watching the ordeal unfold, she started to believe what the SLA had been telling her all along, that the FBI would kill her if they found her. Watching the smouldering building on the screen, she felt she could no longer believe she would be rescued. Dental records confirmed that Hearst was not among the blackened bodies but her parents now feared that their daughter would be killed in retaliation for the death of six SLA members. Matthews decided that now was the time to speak up and tell police that Hearst was no longer a captive but a very willing participant in the militia group's activities. He was flown to San Francisco to speak to investigators who had been working around the clock to put together a case for the Hibernia Bank robbery. Matthews' testimony allowed the

**ABOVE** More than 400 members of the LAPD, the FBI, California Highway patrol and Los Angeles Fire Department surrounded a house they suspected was housing the SLA members. Those inside were ordered to surrender but instead fought back with automatic weapons

**“ THE SLA HAD A PLAN FOR HEARST THAT WOULD BRING THEM OUT OF THE SHADOWS AND INTO THE LIMELIGHT ”**



# WAS PATTY HEARST BRAINWASHED?

RENOWNED PSYCHOLOGIST FRANK OCHBERG TELLS US ABOUT THE EFFECTS OF STOCKHOLM SYNDROME ON A HOSTAGE AND HOW IMPORTANT THE DIAGNOSIS IS TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

**How quickly does Stockholm syndrome take effect in sufferers?**

I have heard from people that it comes over rather quickly, and in my way of analysing it you have to at least go through the stage of being shocked and infantilised, and then given the privileges that allow you to have the bond. As soon as that happens, it can begin – and that can be in the first day. It's impossible to have accurate data as to how many hours or days it takes to come on. I would say it takes those stages: shock, infantilisation, relief of the lack

of control, and then the bond begins to form. It's a process, and it's not always linear.

**How does the syndrome manifest itself in the early stages of capture?**

They've been living a normal, regular life and suddenly they're captured – and they (sufferers) tell me: "I knew I was going to die." The feeling of going from being normal to being in this violent captivity is shock. Then, after a little while, things shift and they're given permission to do things that we take for granted. I believe it is very much like the feelings we had as infants

the comfort of being in the arms of the mother and of being given milk. It's being rescued and soothed, and that's the mother/infant bond. So the brain goes through an alarm phase, goes

through a phase of shock, and then it goes into a phase of negotiation.

that creates the positive attachments in a bizarre way. Another part of the syndrome is that the captor often feels the other side of the bond. Not always, but if the captor feels maternal, that's a good thing for those of us who want to save lives.

**There are many who are unconvinced of the validity of this condition. Why do you think that there is so much scepticism about Stockholm syndrome?**

Not everyone gets Stockholm syndrome. There are those who, in that situation, decide very consciously to befriend their captor. That's not Stockholm syndrome, that's a very conscious and deliberate attempt to avoid punishment or death by being friendly. All I wanted to do was to define the syndrome so that the negotiator [in a hostage situation] could avoid making

negotiations with someone who is not a professional negotiator.

very careful

**In what way is Stockholm syndrome different to being brainwashed?**

Brainwashing is a deliberate attempt to apply torture and relief from torture to influence a person's thoughts and feelings. Stockholm syndrome just happens because the danger, the trauma and the drama that plays out in the siege room is not manipulated.

**Are there any misconceptions about it?**

Yes. I think the major misconception is to apply it where it doesn't apply. If we're using the term

that general heading, Battered wife syndrome, it's not the same as Stockholm syndrome.

child's head with distortions

about the other parent all create a trauma bond, but this is not Stockholm syndrome.

**How has the understanding of it developed over the decades?**

I think it's been applied a little too far and it's been somewhat controversial. Several studies have been done on Stockholm syndrome. FBI researchers

negotiation case in which the

FBI has been brought in. One study showed 27 per cent of the time, another showed six or seven per cent, and it depends on the denominator used. It could be that it happened in a siege in which there were three people, but if there were 200 people, it's unlikely all would have it. So we're mixing the situations, and therefore the statistics are all over the place. I think it makes sense to know it can happen, and if you're managing a formal law enforcement perspective

not fully professional



BIO FRANK OCHBERG

Frank Ochberg is an acclaimed psychiatrist and a pioneer of trauma science from New York, who originally defined the term Stockholm syndrome to aid the management of hostage situations in the 1970s.

## WANTED BY THE FBI

NATIONAL FIREARMS ACT; MATERIAL WITNESS

### William Taylor Harris

FBI No. 100-441100 Date photograph taken unknown  
Aliases: William Frank Harris, William Rader, Jonathan Mario Jonathan  
Mark: Unknown  
Age: 29, born January 22, 1945, Fort Hill, Oklahoma (not supported by birth records)  
Height: 5'7"  
Weight: 145 pounds  
Build: Medium  
Hair: Brown, short  
Occupation: Postal clerk  
Remarks: Reportedly wears a black type motorcycle, no. 100-441100, upper right chest, with "HARRIS" and "100-441100" on it. Also has a black type motorcycle, no. 100-441100, on the back. Also has a black type motorcycle, no. 100-441100, on the back. Also has a black type motorcycle, no. 100-441100, on the back.  
Social Security Numbers Used: 100-441100  
Fingerprint Classification: 9 1 14



### Emily Montague Harris

FBI No. 100-441100 Date photograph taken unknown  
Aliases: Emily Montague Harris  
Age: 29, born January 22, 1945, Fort Hill, Oklahoma (not supported by birth records)  
Height: 5'7"  
Weight: 145 pounds  
Build: Medium  
Hair: Brown, short  
Occupation: Postal clerk  
Remarks: Reportedly wears a black type motorcycle, no. 100-441100, upper right chest, with "HARRIS" and "100-441100" on it. Also has a black type motorcycle, no. 100-441100, on the back. Also has a black type motorcycle, no. 100-441100, on the back. Also has a black type motorcycle, no. 100-441100, on the back.  
Social Security Numbers Used: 100-441100  
Fingerprint Classification: 9 1 14



### Patricia Campbell Hearst

FBI No. 100-441100 Date photograph taken unknown  
Aliases: Patricia Campbell Hearst  
Age: 29, born January 22, 1945, Fort Hill, Oklahoma (not supported by birth records)  
Height: 5'7"  
Weight: 145 pounds  
Build: Medium  
Hair: Brown, short  
Occupation: Postal clerk  
Remarks: Reportedly wears a black type motorcycle, no. 100-441100, upper right chest, with "HARRIS" and "100-441100" on it. Also has a black type motorcycle, no. 100-441100, on the back. Also has a black type motorcycle, no. 100-441100, on the back. Also has a black type motorcycle, no. 100-441100, on the back.  
Social Security Numbers Used: 100-441100  
Fingerprint Classification: 9 1 14



### CAUTION

IS FIREARMS INCLUDING AUTOMATIC WEAPONS. WILLIAM HARRIS AND PATRICIA HEARST ATTEMPT TO AVOID ARREST. ALL THREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED ARMED AND DANGEROUS.

IF YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION CONCERNING THESE PERSONS, PLEASE NOTIFY ME OR CONTACT YOUR LOCAL FBI OFFICE. TELEPHONE NUMBERS AND ADDRESSES OF ALL FBI OFFICES LISTED ON BACK.

*Continued*





grand jury to indict Hearst with 19 felony charges. By now, Hearst and the Harrises were in desperate need of some help in order to survive. Another tape was released to the public, and once again Hearst's voice was the centre of attention as she gave a eulogy of her captors: "Cujo was the gentlest, most beautiful man I have ever known. Neither Cujo or I have ever loved an individual more than we loved each other." The man she spoke of was otherwise known as Willie Wolfe, the only other male besides leader DeFreeze to perish in the fire.

Aware that the FBI was closing in on them, the trio laid low in a farmhouse in Pennsylvania throughout July and August until the scandal in California died down. By the autumn, the three returned to Sacramento, California, where they found some support from people on the fringes of society who wanted to join their diminished army. In April 1975, the SLA members burst through the doors of Crocker Bank. Gunfire killed 42-year-old mother of four Myrna Opsahl. The two masked intruders carrying the guns had been Emily Harris and Kathleen Soliah, meanwhile the getaway car was driven by Hearst. Once this operation was over, the army, led by Bill, was starting to question their leader's authority and methods, and the cracks began to show. Detectives assigned to the case received tips that the Harrises were often seen in the central city area of San Francisco, loitering near a house in one of the neighbourhoods. Officers watching the scene spotted the pair dressed in running

**ABOVE LEFT** Hearst alone stood trial for the Hibernia Bank robbery. According to her testimony, her captors demanded she appear enthusiastic during the heist, threatening her with death should there be any mistakes

**ABOVE RIGHT** The story of the newspaper heiress turned rogue became a foundation for the definition of the term Stockholm syndrome, which Hearst claims prevented her from leaving the group

gear and jogging near one house in particular. When police stopped them, Emily attempted to run but was easily caught. The Harrises gave the officers information that lead them to a house in the Mission district where they were instructed they would find the kidnapped and now-wanted heiress.

### A PRESIDENTIAL PARDON

On 19 September 1975, the wild goose chase for Hearst came to an end. Found holed up in a house with SLA member Wendy Yoshimura, she was arrested. Booked into jail, Hearst listed her occupation as "Urban Guerilla" and wore her notoriety with great pride. In a later interview with Murphy, Hearst said: "When I was first arrested I was still a real mess, I said a lot of crazy things." Soon after her family and friends arrived to support her, she recanted her SLA membership and denied her love for Wolfe and the rest of her 'comrades'. Her defence attorney Terence Hallinan wanted to claim that Hearst had been involuntarily drugged and forced to act on command. However, her parents wanted their daughter's defence to state that she was brainwashed, despite Hallinan's argument that this wouldn't be credible. Instead, the Hearsts employed top legal barrister F Lee Bailey, who strongly fought Hearst's corner during her two-month trial, arguing the SLA had brainwashed Hearst. He argued she was a victim rather than a villain. But Ochberg told **Real Crime** that such a defence cost her the case, and that had psychiatrists known about Stockholm syndrome back then, it could have helped her more, although not totally relieved her of her criminality.

The prosecution sought to prove that Hearst had been a willing participant in the SLA's cause, that she had formed a romantic relationship with Cujo and that the other

**“BOOKED INTO JAIL, HEARST LISTED HER OCCUPATION AS “URBAN GUERRILLA” AND WORE HER NOTORIETY WITH GREAT PRIDE”**





members were her friends rather than her foes. Taking to the witness stand, Hearst described how her captors had sexually molested her. She described one incident where DeFreeze pinched her breasts and pubic region when he was particularly displeased with her. She described how she had feared for her life and was told she would be killed. She was blindfolded and placed in a closet for weeks and mentally abused. When she told the SLA she would join them, they then let her out and had her join their political discussions.

"The person could kill them and chooses, instead, to give them life," Ochberg said, explaining how captors begin to feel positive feelings towards their kidnappers. Hearst spoke of how she was made to study material using only a flashlight and that she would have to recite literature on command and learn the meaning of each head of their seven-headed cobra logo. Her messages as Tania were read from sheets. But the jury failed to see the rationale behind Hearst's defence. "I think the jury or the judge just expects people, as long as they're not insane, to have enough will power to resist, but it's hard to resist a person – a parent, a lover, a rescuer to you – who goes on to commit crimes," said Ochberg.

The jury found her guilty and sentenced her to seven years in prison. She served only 22 months before president Jimmy Carter granted her clemency as a result of dedicated friends and family campaigning for her freedom, and she was released back to her family. "It's part of my life and I realise that there will always be a curiosity about it. You know, with Patricia Hearst, 'kidnapped newspaper heiress' will always come before that name." On his last day in office in 2001, Bill Clinton gave the heiress a presidential pardon, saying that had the circumstances been different, then the crimes committed by Hearst would have never happened.

## PATTY'S TAPES

THROUGHOUT A SERIES OF COMMUNICATIONS, HEARST'S MIND AND FOCUS SHIFTED FROM BEING A PRISONER OF WAR TO A SOLDIER ON THE FRONT LINE

"Mom, dad, I'm okay. I had a few scrapes and stuff but they've washed them up and they're getting okay and I've caught a cold but they're giving me pills for it. I'm not being starved or beaten or unnecessarily frightened." 12/02/74

"I know that a lot of people have written and are really concerned about me and my safety and what you're going through. I want them all to know that I'm okay and to understand that I'll be okay as long as the SLA demands are met and as long as the two prisoners in San Quentin are okay and as long as the FBI doesn't come in here, that is my biggest worry." 16/02/74

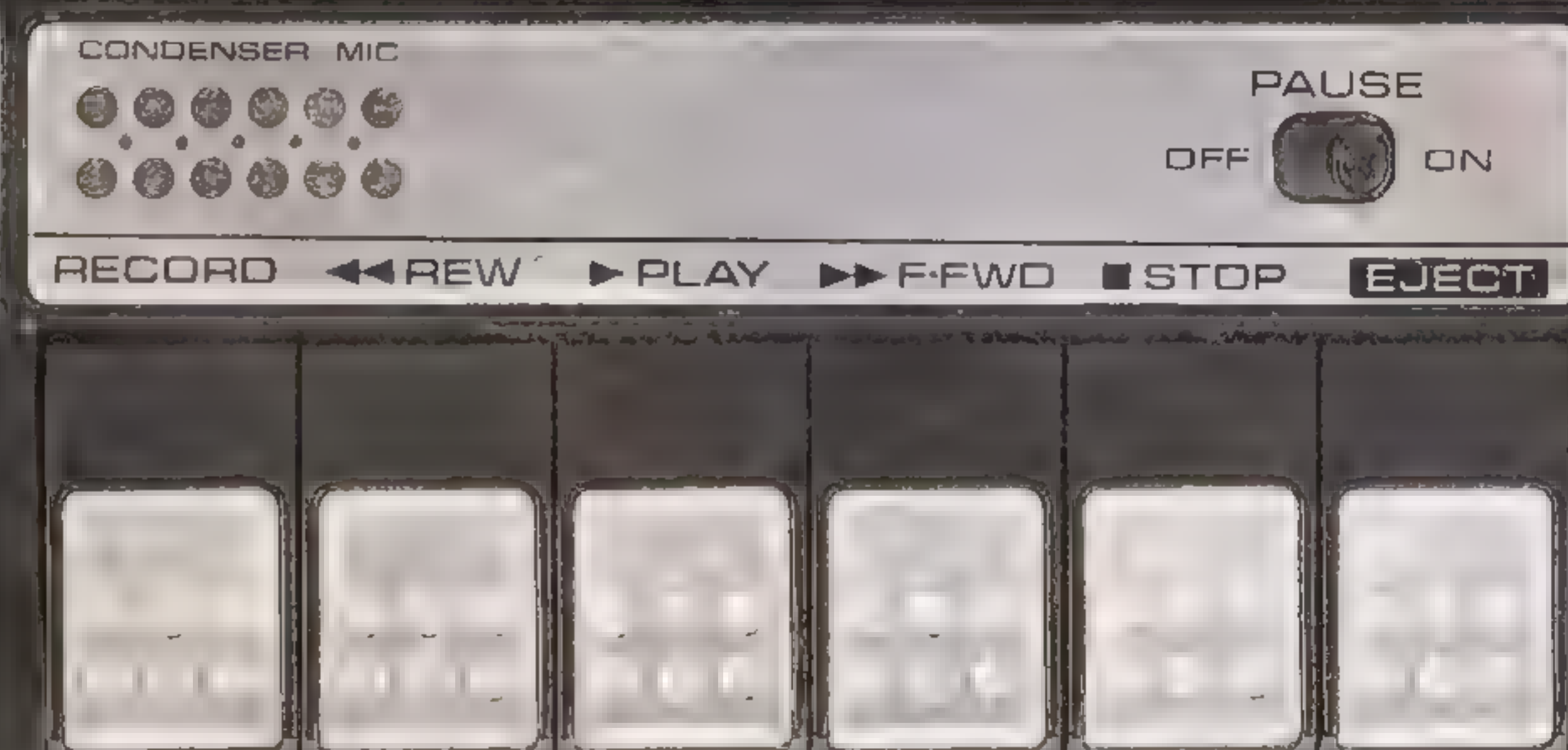
"I have been given the choice of one: being released in a safe area or two: joining the forces of the Symbioses Liberation Army and fight for my freedom and the freedom of all oppressed people. I have chosen to stay and fight. I have been given the name Tania..." 09/03/74

"Mom, dad, I've been hearing reports about the food programme. So far it sounds like you and your advisers have managed to turn it into a real disaster. You said that it was out of your hands, what you should have said was that you wash your hands of it." 03/04/74

"I renounce my class privilege and I would never choose to live the rest of my life surrounded by pigs like the Hearsts." 24/04/74

"OUR RELATIONSHIP WASN'T  
BASED ON BOURGEOIS FUCKED UP  
VALUES. ATTITUDES AND GOALS.  
OUR RELATIONSHIP'S FOUNDATION  
WAS OUR COMMITMENT TO THE  
STRUGGLE AND OUR LOVE FOR  
THE PEOPLE."

07/07/74





# Loopy Looters





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## PUZZLING PILFERY

SOME OF HISTORY'S MOST ECCENTRIC ROBBERIES

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## THE GREAT MAPLE SYRUP HEIST

THESE STICKY FINGERED STEALERS LOOTED LIQUID GOLD

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## THE SLIPPERY STORY OF THE IRISH BUTTER BANDIT

A PARTICULARLY GREASY WAY TO ESCAPE INCARCERATION

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## THE PECULIAR PHANTOM BARBER OF PASCAGOULA

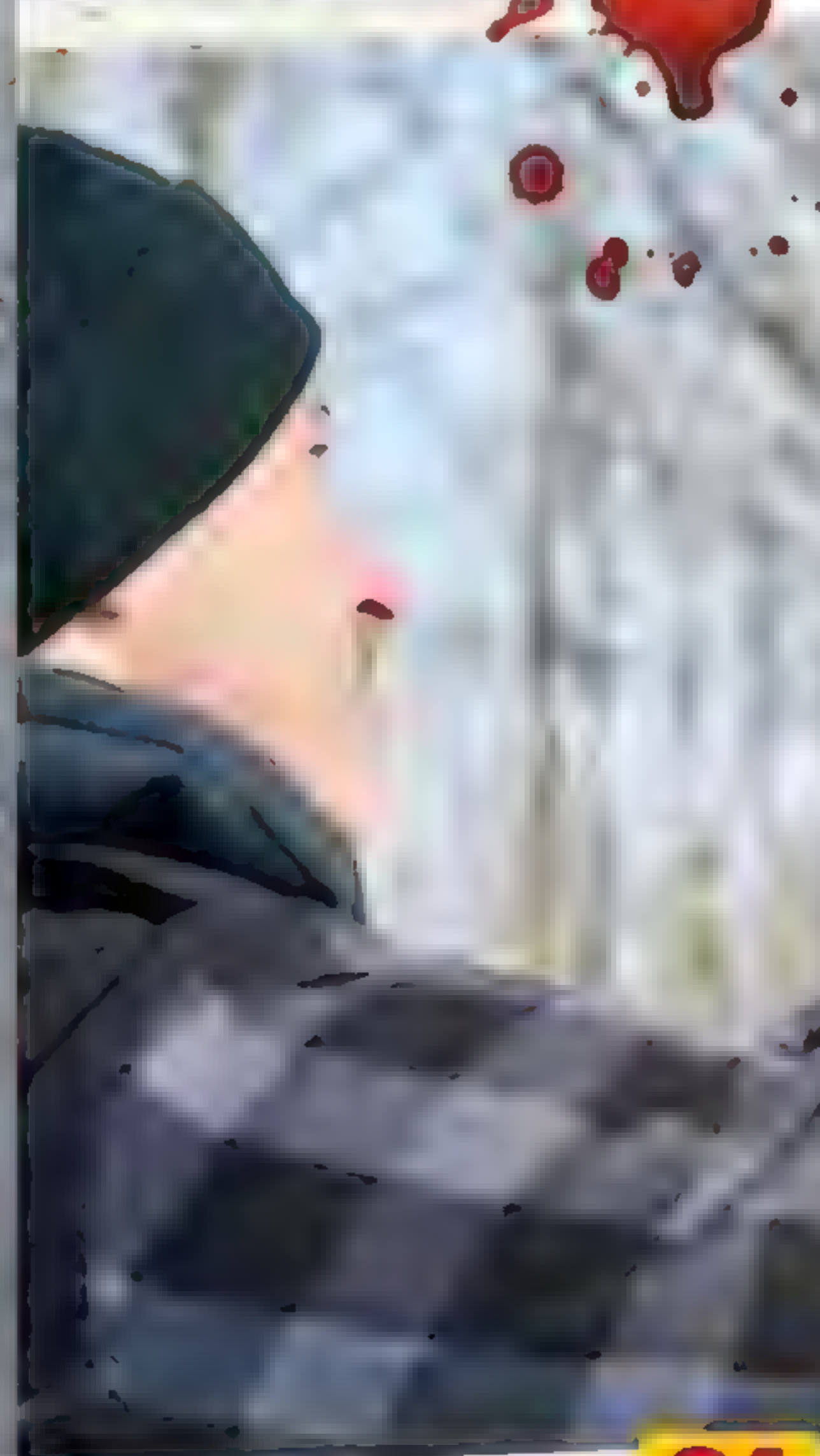
THE HAIR-RAISING TALE OF A MYSTERIOUS MIDNIGHT INTRUDER

60



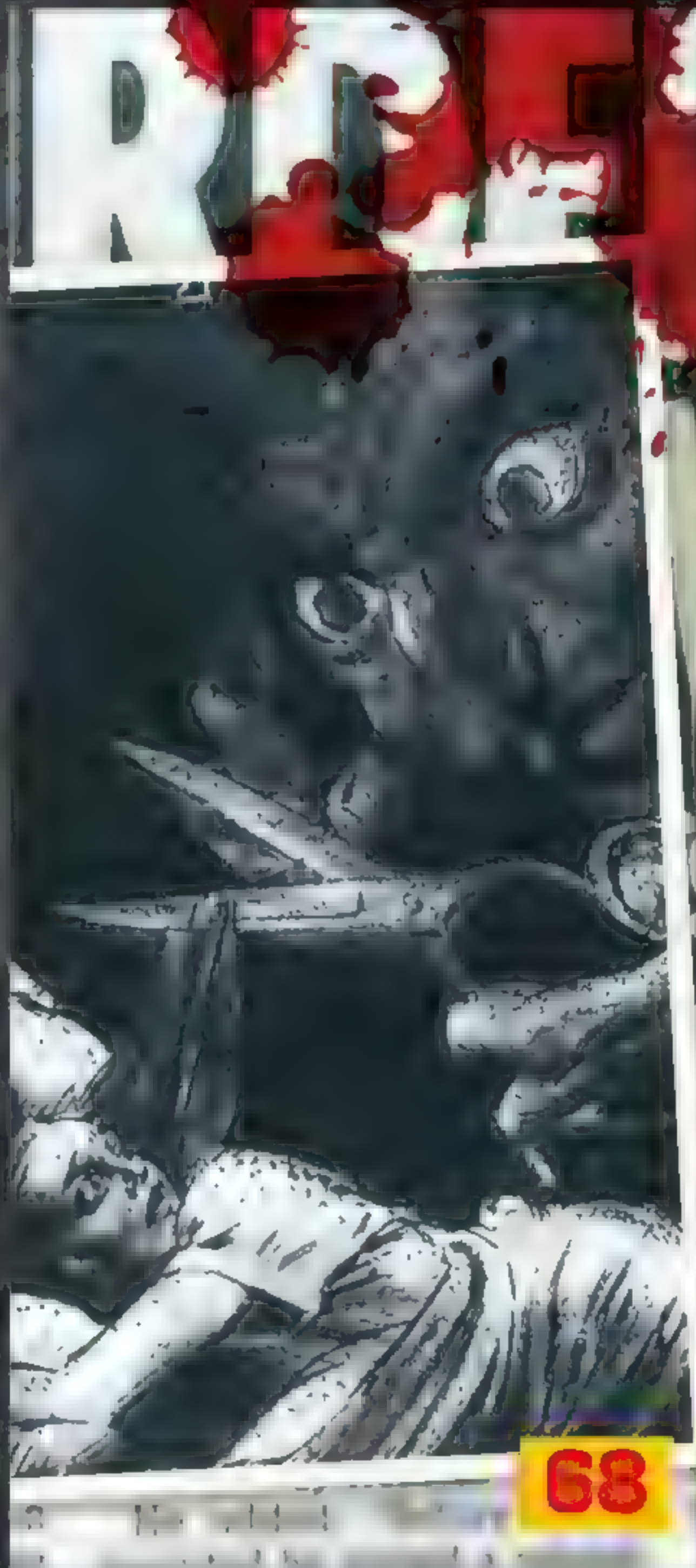
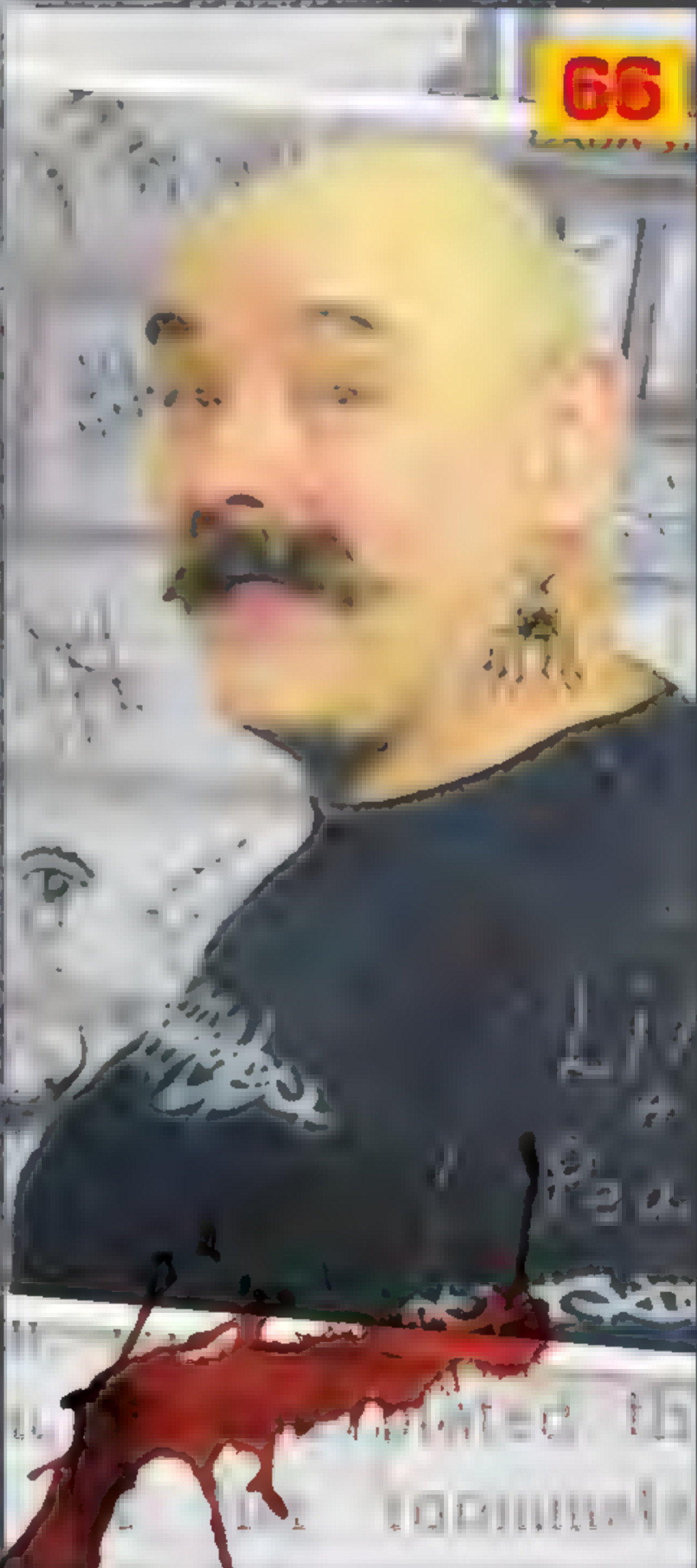
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PASCAGOULA, Miss.  
—Police Chief



...harm beyond losing

66



68





# PUZZLING PILFERY

NOTHING IS TOO BIG  
OR TOO SMALL TO  
STEAL FOR THESE  
RAVING MAD ROBBERS

**T**heft is a common crime in capitalist society, and pinching money, items to sell or necessities such as food is fairly understandable. However, there are some tricky thieves that defy all logic and swipe some seriously strange things...



# FRAUDSTER FLOGS THE EIFFEL TOWER

VICTOR LUSTIG WAS A NOTORIOUS CON ARTIST WHO PULLED OFF ONE OF HISTORY'S MOST AUDACIOUS CRIMES: HE SOLD PARIS'S BELOVED EIFFEL TOWER — NOT JUST ONCE, BUT TWICE

In 1925, Austria-Hungarian-born Lustig noticed that the Eiffel Tower, which had been erected in 1889, was costing a fortune for post-war France to maintain. So he entered talks with five scrap-metal dealers under the guise of the deputy director general of the Ministère de Postes et Télégraphes.

Lustig offered to sell the tower to one of them and urged his assembled team to keep quiet to avoid a public outcry. Lustig pinned his hopes on one man in particular — the upstart André Poisson, who was desperate for kudos in a city in which he felt sidelined. Poisson handed over a bag of cash and went to collect his 7,000 tons of steel. Upon his arrival, the authorities denied knowledge of the deal and Poisson was too embarrassed to inform the police about the con he'd fallen prey to.

Buoyed by how easy his success was, Lustig, who had taken a train to Vienna, returned a few weeks later to try the trick on another group of scrap dealers. This time the victim swallowed their pride and went to the police, but Lustig managed to escape arrest by the skin of his teeth.



# SHAKESPEARE SWIPES THE GLOBE

BEFORE THE GLOBE, LONDON'S MOST CELEBRATED THEATRE WAS SITUATED ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE RIVER THAMES IN SHOREDITCH

Aptly named 'The Theatre', it was built by James Burbage and for decades had been home to many acting troupes including the Lord Chamberlain's Men, of which Shakespeare was a part. The land was leased from a Mr Allen, but in 1597 he refused to renew the contract. After months of disagreements, Burbage's sons decided to take matters into their own hands. In the dead of night, the two men, along with a carpenter and a dozen actors, "armed with unlawful and offensive weapons, as namely swords, daggers, bills, axes

and such like", crept onto the site and dismantled the theatre. Shakespeare was one of them.

As the Burbages couldn't afford to lease a new plot on their own, they offered five members of the company the chance to become part-owners of a new theatre. With their investments, they leased some land on the south bank of the river and ferried the salvaged timber to Southwark. The materials were used to build another, and in 1599 the Globe Theatre opened its doors to the public.



# ART-THIEF'S COAT CONCEALS PRIZED LOOT

THE ART WORLD'S BIGGEST HEIST EARNED ITS PERPETRATOR, STÉPHANE BREITWIESER, A COOL \$1.4 BILLION

Self-proclaimed art connoisseur Stéphane Breitwieser's career as an art thief began in Germany in 1995 and ended in 2001, during which time he 'collected' 239 works of art from 172 museums across Europe. His method was cunning, yet simple. An accomplice – his girlfriend – would distract security guards while Breitwieser would simply lift the artwork off the walls and stash them under his coat. Breitwieser's crime spree only came to an end in 2001, when he was caught stealing a bugle from the Richard Wagner Museum in Switzerland.

Breitwieser was only sentenced to three years in prison, serving just two. Justifying the short sentence, authorities noted that the robbery wasn't motivated by profit; Breitwieser simply wanted to keep the art for himself. Unfortunately, his compulsive kleptomania resulted in the destruction of numerous priceless works of art when his mother attempted to eliminate the evidence of her son's crimes. After leaving prison, he gained fame with his 2006 autobiography, *Confessions d'un Voleur d'Art* (Confessions Of An Art Thief) and has since been caught selling stolen artefacts on eBay – so perhaps money did play a part in his motivation after all.

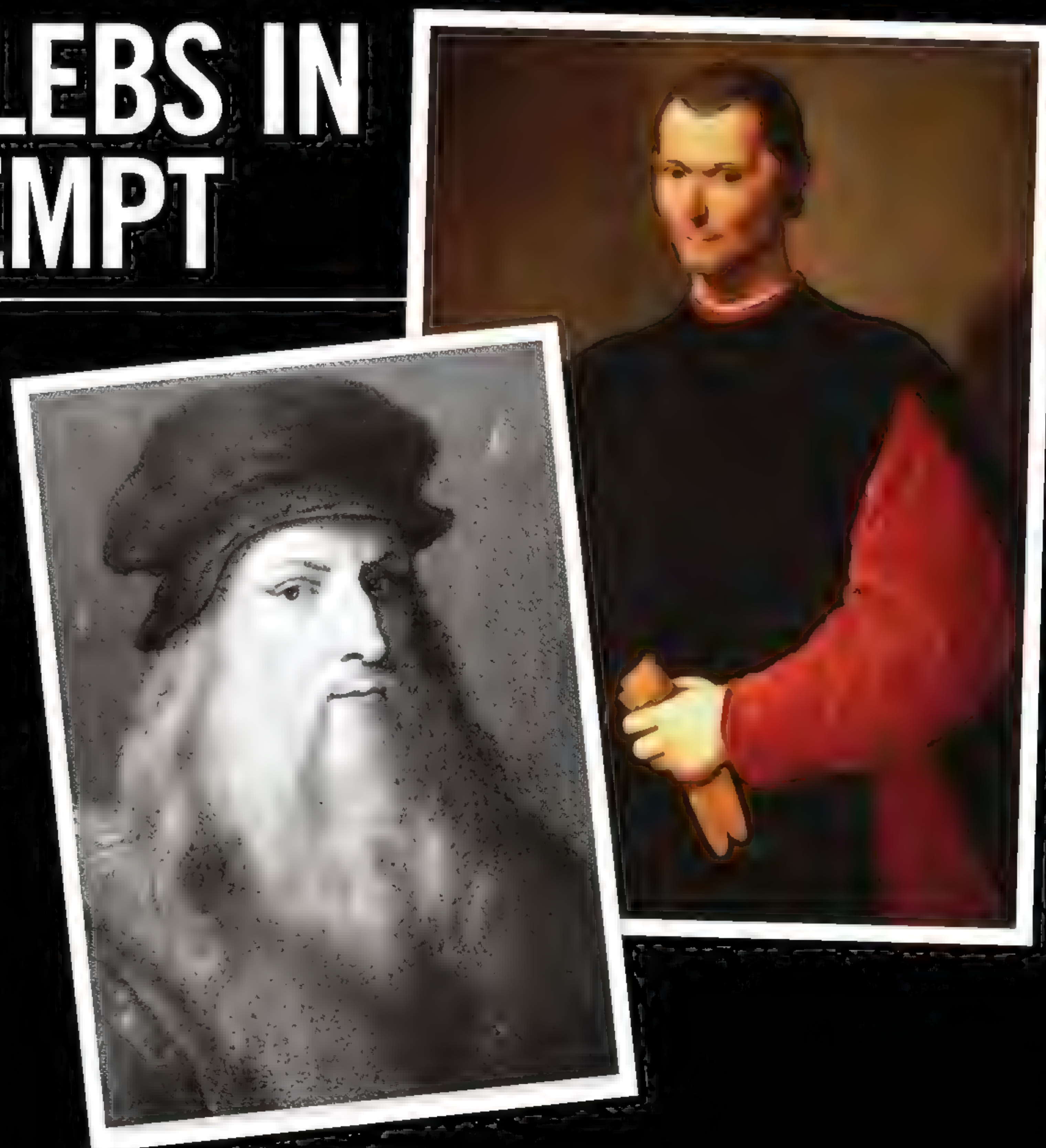


# RENAISSANCE CELEBS IN RIVER THEFT ATTEMPT

HOW DOES ANYONE STEAL A RIVER?

Answer: you don't. The dynamic duo of Leonardo da Vinci and Niccolò Machiavelli walked away with nothing but red cheeks and a pile of dirt after their audacious attempt to steal the River Arno flopped. While in the employ of the nefarious Cesare Borgia, Machiavelli convinced da Vinci to aid him in Borgia's plan to divert the river away from the city of Pisa, Florence's closest military rival. Success would have meant Florence would have been bolstered by incoming sea trade. Despite da Vinci's brilliant plan to reroute the river with dams and artificial inlets, the operation proved too costly and da Vinci tasted failure. You've got to admire their guts, though.

**“MACHIABELLI CONVINCED DA VINCI TO AID HIM IN BORGIA'S PLAN TO DIVERT THE RIVER AWAY FROM THE CITY OF PISA”**





# LLAMA LOOTERS ENJOY BOOZY TOUR

IN 2013, ONE LUCKY LLAMA EXPERIENCED A GUIDED TOUR OF THE FRENCH CITY OF BORDEAUX BEFORE BEING RETURNED HOME BY AUTHORITIES

Five teenagers on a night out initially planned to borrow a zebra from a nearby circus, but admitted that while the zebra was too stubborn to join them, the llama – named Serge – seemed more than happy to go along for the ride.

The group, who had left a nightclub close to the circus, took Serge around the city, even on a tram ride. It was only when the tram driver called the police that the gang left Serge tied to a lamp post – but not before taking a few pictures with their four-legged friend.

Serge was returned to the circus safe and sound, but the circus responded by increasing security around the animal enclosures. The five thieves were later arrested, but a petition was launched, calling for the group not to face any criminal charges.

# MAN STEALS EINSTEIN'S BRAIN

WHEN GENIUS ALBERT EINSTEIN DIED, HE LEFT SOME VERY SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS FOR HIS REMAINS: THEY WERE TO BE CREMATED

His plans had been well thought out as he didn't want his body to be studied or worshipped. Despite these well-laid plans, on 18 April 1955, Einstein's brain was unexpectedly stolen.

Taken by a pathologist called Thomas Harvey, the brain was divided into blocks before being distributed among other pathologists to be studied. Harvey later sought retrospective permission from Einstein's son for the study of his father's brain, which he was reluctantly given.

After years of study, it was decided that Einstein's brain was formatted differently to those of other males. Portions of the brain had been discovered to have a higher proportion of glial cells, which provide protection to the neurons in the brain.





# THE GREAT MAPLE SYRUP HEIST

IN 2011, STICKY-FINGERED THIEVES HATCHED AN UNBELIEVABLE PLOT TO STEAL MILLIONS OF DOLLARS' WORTH OF CANADA'S MOST FAMOUS EXPORT

WORDS BEN BIGGS

**T**he most valuable heist in Canadian history didn't involve the theft of anything like money, gold or precious jewels – the sort of loot you would expect to be targeted. It was a robbery of a very different kind that went undetected for nearly a year, before an inspector for the Federation of Quebec Maple Syrup Producers (FPAQ) literally stumbled upon it at a warehouse north-east of Montreal. Michel Gauvreau was conducting an annual inspection of the FPAQ reserve in July 2012, counting and checking the integrity of thousands of unmarked, sealed white barrels full of maple syrup. As he clambered up the barrels, stacked up to six high to the ceiling and dozens deep, one tipped and nearly fell down. Gauvreau frowned: each one of the barrels should have weighed around 270 kilograms (42 stone) and would not have so easily shifted under his weight. The suspect barrel was dutifully taken down to the floor and opened – only to find that it was completely empty. More barrels were selected by the inspector and cracked open. While some were intact, many others were either empty or their golden contents had been replaced with water. After a thorough inventory, it was discovered that 9,571 barrels that had once contained a total of nearly 3,000 tons of maple syrup had been siphoned off. The value of this haul? Nearly \$20 million Canadian dollars. The stolen syrup was undoubtedly destined for the black market – but who would even think to steal enough pancake sauce to cover a Moon-high stack of waffles?

**ABOVE** Cans of maple syrup, stacked at a 'sugar shack' – a cabin in Canada that taps maple trees for their sap

**RIGHT** The sweet sap in maple trees was discovered thousands of years ago by Canada's Indigenous population, before European settlers arrived



FPAQ's control over the maple syrup market worked well for some Quebecian maple syrup producers, though others considered the federation's heavy-handedness when it came to enforcing quotas as being like a drug cartel's racket. These maple syrup revolutionaries longed for a free market in Quebec – and the fact they railed against FPAQ put a handful of mavericks firmly in the crosshairs of RMCP detective Luc Briand, lead investigator on the case. After conducting over 300 interviews and issuing 40 search warrants, Briand closed in on two key suspects: Avik Caron, whose wife co-owned the warehouse where the stolen syrup was stored, and Richard Vallières, who knew the maple syrup market well and had a reputation as a 'barrel roller' – someone who was willing to wriggle around FPAQ's tight regulations.

Over the course of several months and with the help of a few others, this pair was able to remove thousands of barrels of syrup from the warehouse, replace them with fake barrels, take the federation barrels to a warehouse owned by Vallières, siphon off the maple syrup and refill the original barrels with water, before transporting these back to the federation warehouse. Vallières then sold the illicit load to Etienne St-Pierre, a New Brunswick maple syrup seller, who exported the syrup to the US and Europe. But they got sloppy, some of the barrels were returned empty, and the truck used to shift the golden goods was traced after some old-fashioned detective work that followed the black market syrup to its origin. The truck driver, Sébastien Jutras, was hauled in for a police interview and he offered his testimony against Caron and Vallières in the hope of a lenient sentence. The jig was up: Jutras was given an eight-month sentence, St-Pierre got two years and an \$850,000 fine, Caron got five years and a \$1.2 million fine while Vallières, as ringleader, received eight years in prison plus a staggering \$94 million fine. And all over a fortune from some sweet, sticky tree sap.



“THE GOLDEN GOODS WERE TRACED AFTER SOME DETECTIVE WORK THAT FOLLOWED THE BLACK MARKET SYRUP TO ITS ORIGIN”



LEFT Maple syrup is loved all over the world, so it made perfect sense to export the stolen sap globally.

BELOW RIGHT Maple trees are tapped for their sap, the watery liquid is collected and reduced in large boiling vats to concentrate the sugars.

## OPEC OF MAPLE SYRUP

Maple syrup is to Canadians what oil is to Saudi Arabia: the industry is worth upwards of \$2 billion and it's an iconic Canadian export entrenched in the culture – the maple leaf is even featured on the national flag. PPAQ (formerly known as FPAQ, or Fédération des Producteurs Acéricoles du Québec) is a federation of around 7,000 maple syrup producers that controls 80 per cent of the world's supply. It strictly controls supply in Quebec to maintain the price of their members' product. This is done by storing vast quantities of maple syrup in a strategic reserve across dozens of warehouses, stockpiling barrels when there's a glut of maple syrup and then releasing it onto the market in the leaner times.



Thousands of barrels stored in a PPAQ warehouse, painted a distinctive blue-white and labelled with individual grading stickers. Each one is worth around \$1,800 Canadian dollars.

© Alamy, Adobe Stock, Getty, PPAQ





# THE SLIPPERY STORY OF THE IRISH BUTTER BANDIT

INSPIRED BY THE BIOPIC OF A NOTORIOUS ENGLISH PRISONER, KNIFE-WIELDING IRISHMAN MICHAEL ROONEY GOT CREATIVE WITH HIS ESCAPE PLAN



**A**n Irishman who slathered himself in butter as part of a bizarre bid to avoid being captured by police was spared jail time. Police in the area of County Kerry, Ireland, were alerted to an emergency call on 20 October 2014, in relation to 35-year-old Michael Rooney, who had broken almost all of the furniture inside the house he shared with his partner in an intoxicated rage. When police arrived at the scene, they discovered the perpetrator inside his home wearing nothing but a pair of jeans, apparently to better to apply the slippery spread to his body. "This was a very frightening incident," said Judge Thomas E O'Donnell in Circuit Criminal Court.

Once police were inside the Listowel home they found that Rooney had barricaded himself in the house by placing two chairs against a door. He had greased himself up with butter, hoping this would make it near impossible for police to capture





## “OFFICERS FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO PLACE ROONEY IN HANDCUFFS BECAUSE OF THE BUTTER ON HIS BODY”

him, and was brandishing a 35-centimetre-long knife at the police, shouting, “Come in ye bastards.”

Police attempts to capture the slippery Irishman would be futile. A scuffle between Rooney, Sergeant Tim O’Keeffe and Garda Colin McCarthy resulted in the two officers pepper spraying the man in an attempt to subdue and successfully arrest him. However, the officers found it difficult to place Rooney in handcuffs because of the butter on his body.

Allegedly Rooney’s escape plan had been inspired by the 2008 movie *Bronson*, a biopic of one of the most notorious and high-profile criminals in British history, Charles Bronson. In the film, Bronson strips bare and covers himself in butter before attacking police. It was discovered that Rooney had alcohol and prescription medication in his system.

In March 2015, the case was brought before the Tralee District Court. The evidence book was submitted to the judge who sent it forward to the next sitting of the Tralee Circuit Court in May 2015. Rooney pleaded guilty to threatening to kill two police officers and to brandishing an

offensive weapon. At his sentencing, the court was told that Rooney, who was still with the partner of his two children, had written a letter of apology to the Garda, given up drink and had done much to “rehabilitate himself” following the incident. A psychiatrist report detailed how Rooney was unemployed at the time of the incident, having previously worked in the UK, and was drinking due to boredom while he was on medication.

Local authorities expressed their concern and told the judge that the confrontation was “totally out of character” for the Irishman, who had no prior convictions. Judge O’Donnell told the court, “The accused was subdued and arrested with difficulty due to the fact he had covered his body with butter.” He added that the defendant had done little to help his situation by applying the butter to his body. He sentenced Rooney to two years on each of the three counts against him concurrently, backdating the ruling to May 2015. He did, however, suspend the sentence for two years, telling the father of two, “Mr Rooney, I am giving you a chance. I don’t want to see you here again.”

**LEFT** Charles Bronson, the British criminal known as “Britain’s most notorious prisoner” inspired Michael Rooney’s bizarre, buttery method of evading capture

**BELOW** We suggest that this popular Irish export works better on toast or inside a baked potato





# THE PECULIAR PHANTOM BARBER OF PASCAGOULA

IF YOU DON'T LOSE YOUR HAIR OVER THE CREEPY CASE OF THIS NIGHT-TIME  
INTRUDER, IT IS GUARANTEED TO LEAVE IT STANDING ON END

WORDS ALICE PATTILLO





**ABOVE** A contemporary image published in the *San Francisco Examiner* (August 1942) displaying the nightmarish hold the Phantom Barber had over the community

**O**n 5 June 1942, in the small town of Pascagoula, Mississippi, 11-year-old Mary Evelyn Briggs and 12-year-old Edna Marie Hydel were disturbed from their peaceful slumber in their bedroom at Our Lady of Victories convent to the shocking sight of what Briggs would describe as a short, fat man launching himself out of their window. The man had awakened Briggs as he bent over her with a shiny object clutched in his hands and messed with her hair. When he noticed she was awake he told her to “shh”, but the panicked young girl screamed instead, arousing her roommate, Hydel.

The girls appeared to be unharmed by the intruder and nothing was missing from their room, save for a lock of hair snipped from their heads – it appeared that this nocturnal intruder had broken in for the primary purpose of trimming their tresses and as a result, he quickly earned the nickname of the ‘Phantom Barber’. The man had cut the window screen and made his escape through the nearby woodland. Shortly after, another young girl, six-year-old Carol Peattie, was the Phantom’s next victim. He snipped off her blonde curls during the night, leaving behind nothing but a sandy footprint and another sliced window screen.

The final Phantom attack occurred before the month of June was up – but this time the barber took a clipping from a grown woman. Mrs R E Taylor awoke one night to a stomach-turning smell, causing her to become violently ill. Once she recovered she discovered that a chunk of her hair was missing, leading to theories that the sickening stench that awoke her was chloroform – perhaps used by the criminal to subdue his victims.



**THE GIRLS  
APPEARED TO  
BE UNHARMED  
BY THE  
INTRUDER  
AND NOTHING  
WAS MISSING  
FROM THEIR  
ROOM, SAVE  
FOR A LOCK OF  
EACH OF THEIR  
HAIR SNIPPED  
FRESHLY FROM  
THEIR HEADS**

## Woman's Hair Snipped By 'Phantom Barber'

PASCAGOULA, Miss., June 23 (UP)—Pascagoula's "phantom barber" has ridden again.

Mrs. R. E. Taylor reported two inches of her new permanent had been shorn by the strange shearer while she slept in a bedroom with her husband and two daughters.

"I had a vague feeling of something passing over my face," Mrs. Taylor said, "then woke up feeling ill." The tonsorial artist had broken through a window, cut her hair and fled.

Previous victims of the "phantom barber," all within the last 10 days, were three little girls. Police believed he used chloroform to keep his subjects asleep while he snipped their locks.

## German Is Arrested As Phantom Barber; See Morale Attack

PASCAGOULA, Miss. — (UP)—Police Chief A. W. Ezell claimed today that "the phantom barber" who broke into at least 10 homes to cut the hair of the sleeping occupants, is William A. Dolan, 57, a German educated chemist.

Dolan, Ezell announced, has been in jail for three weeks and is charged with attempted murder. His motivation, Ezell charged, was to impair the morale of war workers.

Dolan was charged in connection with an assault on Terrell Heidelberg and his wife by "the phantom barber" the night of June 13. They were beaten with an iron pipe and were the only victims of the barber who suffered physical harm beyond losing their hair.

The only victim of a hair-shearing who awoke in time to see the "barber" was Mary Evelyn Bridges at Our Lady of Victories convent.

"I saw the figure of a kinda short, fat man" she said, "bending over me with something shiny in his hand and he was fooling with my hair. When he saw me open my eyes he said 'sshh' . . . I yelled . . . He jumped out of the window."

He was charged today with attempted murder in connection with an attack on Mr. and Mrs. Terrell Heidelberg just after midnight June 13. The Heidelbergs were slugged with an iron pipe as they slept in their home.

ABOVE Newspapers were full of stories of the strange hair-trimming happenings



## TIED TOGETHER

A few days after the Phantom Barber entered the Peattie residence and before he disturbed Mrs Taylor's brand new perm, there was another night-time attack in Pascagoula. But, aside from the midnight break-in through the window, this one didn't fit with the Phantom's modus operandi. On 13 June, Terrell Heidelberg and his wife Lillian were brutally beaten with an iron pipe as they slept. The couple survived, the attack but neither of them could identify any distinguishing features of their attacker. Many believed that this was an escalation of the Phantom Barber, but with no missing hair and no other similarities between this incident and the previous hair choppings, other than the time and way in which the assailant entered the home, it seems highly unlikely. What's more, it occurred between the little girls' hair cuts and the shearing of Mrs Taylor – why would the barber escalate to violence and then return to his old ways so quickly?

## FALL OUT

With the backdrop of World War II, many folks were already on edge and the thought of a midnight home invader sent them into panic. Police Chief A W Ezell ordered his task force to be on high alert and put more patrols on the streets. There was even a \$300 police reward for any information that could lead to the Phantom's capture, which was increased with contributions by the Ingalls Shipbuilding company and Jackson County Sheriff Guy Krebs – who added \$100 to the reward pot after more reports of the Phantom Barber were called in from other nearby communities.

The Army also relaxed their dim-out regulations in the town in hopes that the perpetrator could be sighted and apprehended more effectively. Residents took matters into their own hands, boarding up their windows entirely and keeping themselves armed and vigilant. Men refused to work the graveyard shifts at the local shipping yard so they could be home to protect their families, directly impacting the war effort, and women would no longer leave their homes after dark.

## MAKING HEADWAY?

By August, a suspect had been arrested for the attack on the Heidelbergs: German-educated chemist William Dolan. The 57-year-old man was accused of being a Nazi sympathiser – allegedly had a grudge against Terrell Heidelberg's father – giving him a feeble motive – and had previously been arrested for trespassing. The police also discovered a "quantity of human hair" behind Dolan's property, some of which was believed to belong to Peattie, but it is unclear how they deciphered the owner of the hair without DNA testing. Dolan was accused of orchestrating the Phantom Barber attacks "to impair the morale of war workers" but he was never charged for the bizarre break-ins and midnight haircuts. Instead, he was convicted for the assaults on the Heidelbergs and sentenced to ten years in prison for attempted murder. The community was relieved and believed their nightmare was over.

However, Dolan maintained his innocence and was passing a notoriously unreliable polygraph test. In 1951, he was released in 1951. Mary Evelyn Briggs (right) having her newly-fashioned haircut, courtesy of the Phantom Barber, played with by her sister, Laura

Mary Evelyn Briggs (right) having her newly-fashioned haircut, courtesy of the Phantom Barber, played with by her sister, Laura



be innocent of both the Heidelberg attack and the haircuts, deducing that the man was most likely an easy scapegoat who was already considered a traitor by local townsfolk thanks to his pro-German leanings. Unfortunately, whether he was guilty of the strange snippings or not, Dolan's name will forever be associated with the Phantom Barber – the case, however, technically remains unsolved and has entered urban legend territory.

## A HAIR-BRAINED SCHEME

While motives were suggested for Dolan's alleged attack on the Heidelbergs, there is nothing to tie Dolan to the other night clippings and one question still remains: what would prompt someone to creep into homes at midnight to simply steal little girls' hair? Theories range from psychologically-driven reasonings such as thrill-seeking, a deranged sexual fetish and the need to assert dominance and control, to more outlandish explanations, such as the Phantom's identity literally being an unseen force – a supernatural entity. And what was the culprit doing with the hair? In times of severe restraint with rationing and limited resources, perhaps there is a logical reason why this crafty coiffeur was collecting tresses? Or maybe, just maybe, he was collecting the hair for some devilish occult ritual. Whatever the motivation, one thing is for sure – the Phantom Barber struck fear in the hearts of the people of Pascagoula, and has gone down in history as one of America's most peculiar unsolved mysteries.



# Strange Circumstances

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THE CRAFTY CAT WHO ATTEMPTED TO ASSIST A PRISON BREAK

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TWO PARTYING PALS LEFT THEIR BUDDY'S CORPSE TO PICK UP THE TAB...



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...friend of C...  
...been stabbed...  
...the bed...  
...of...  
...no...

SCAGOULA; Miss.  
—Police Chief...  
claimed...



...arm beyond los **76**

**82**



CECIL HOTEL

...located 15...  
...commute...

**90**



...the...







**ABOVE** Don't worry, the cat was handed over to animal control unharmed



# FELONIOUS FELINE

A CRAFTY CAT CAUGHT SMUGGLING DRILL BITS, SAW BLADES AND A CELL PHONE INTO A BRAZILIAN PRISON REFUSED TO ANSWER QUESTIONS. CHARGES WERE DROPPED

**A** cat was 'arrested' outside a Brazilian jail for attempting to assist in an elaborate prison break!

The cat, which will remain nameless, was found by prison guards outside a medium-security jail in Arapiraca, a small city in the centre of the northeastern state of Alagoas in Brazil. The cat was apprehended while crossing the main gate on New Year's Eve in 2012 following a report of suspicious activity.

"An agent saw the cat and went to look at it closely because something about it seemed wrong," said Marcelo Avelino, who is the head of the prison guards' union.

At a glance, the black-and-white feline appeared to have sticky tape strapped around its middle. But on closer inspection the situation became a lot more sinister. Under the tape was a bag containing a selection of tunnel-digging tools. Presumably, they were to be delivered to the inmates to help them stage an escape.

The tools included several drill bits, files and tiny saw blades. With them was a collection of other confiscated items, including a mobile phone with a battery and charger, a memory card and a set of earphones. Officials believed the tools were going to be utilised by inmates to tunnel out of the prison, and the phone used to communicate with other criminal networks in the city.

Prior to its arrest, guards had noticed the cat going in and out of the prison gates, but it did not usually attempt to smuggle contraband in. According to prison officer Luiz de Oliveira Souza, the cat had been raised by the inmates of the Arapiraca prison and was trained to return to the building in order to deliver the breakout equipment. "We were very surprised by this new tactic of the prisoners," said a spokesperson. Officials believed that inmates' relatives had been taking the cat home with them after visits to the prison and taking care of it while it wasn't busy committing felonies.

After being detained, the cat was handed over to a local animal centre to receive medical care. Speaking to Brazil's

local paper, Estado de S Paulo, a jail representative said: "It will be hard to discover who is responsible since the cat does not speak." The cat was not held for questioning and there was no trial.

All of the prison's 263 inmates were suspects in the jailbreak attempt. The culprit was never discovered and the case remains very much a mystery. On this occasion, none of the inmates were willing to let the cat out of the bag.

Incredibly, this isn't the first time that felons have recruited the help of the animal kingdom to aid them in their criminal activity. In 2010, Colombian agents were forced to clip the wings of a flock of parrots that had been trained by a notorious — and admittedly innovative — drugs gang to squawk warnings at them if police got too close.

The crafty cat avoided lock up, but it would have looked great in orange



© Adobe Stock



# OFF WITH HIS 'HEAD'!

SHE CHUCKED HIS MANHOOD FROM A CAR WINDOW IN A FIT OF PIQUE. WOULD JOHN WAYNE GET A HAPPY ENDING WITH HIS 'FRANKENPENIS'?

WORDS DR CHARLIE DOUGHTON

**O**n the night of 23 June, 1993, John Wayne Bobbitt received the kind of notoriety that no man ever truly wants. His wife Lorena had snapped after years of domestic abuse and cut off the tip of his penis while he slept. Lorena was later acquitted of the crime on grounds of temporary insanity. What abuse could the chap have done to cause her to sever his 'chopper'? How did they take their affairs in hand afterwards?

The lady on the overhead court room camera was doll like. Absurdly young looking, with her dark curls tousled back into a school-girlish ponytail, she sniffled into a tissue that was nonetheless perfectly folded. It was perhaps to be expected of someone with a career as a manicurist. Yet this dainty figure had been charged with the crime of malicious wounding. Lorena knew the man she had harmed. They had met in 1988 at a military ball in Quantico. He was an American Marine. She had emigrated from Ecuador two years earlier in search of her American Dream.

## THE BIG MAN?

With a movie star name, perhaps John Wayne thought of himself as something of a big man. He had a history of assaulting women and would be jailed for 15 days for battering another woman in later years. In the first instance, however, his behaviour culminated on the balmy mid-summer night of 23 June, 1993, in Louisiana. He had been out with friends and had become intoxicated. Alcohol is never the best thing to have if you can't control your impulses, and John came home and fought with Lorena. It was the latest in a campaign she claimed had included raping her, cheating on her, forcing her to undergo an abortion and to give him anal sex despite it contravening her faith. She said he even used "Marine torture techniques", involving strangling her and squeezing her face. The rape was the only charge of which he was later acquitted. After their fight, John went to bed.

Later that night, the house was silent when footsteps entered the kitchen. Taking care to



ABOVE On the way to the courthouse, John Wayne Bobbitt is surrounded by photographers

BELOW A photograph brandished by Dr James T. Sehn depicts the decapitated penis







OFF WITH HIS 'HEAD'!

be quiet, a determined hand nursing a lover's resentments opened a drawer, caressed the smooth, slightly curved material and then slid the eight-inch kitchen knife into an embrace. More soft padding led up to the chamber. Then the knife came down.

John woke to find a gaping hole weeping into his bedding. Lorena, on the other hand, was triumphant. She'd already escaped in the car, taking his offending implement with her. The meat of the former phallus was chucked out of the window and landed in a field. It's a wonder it wasn't nibbled by the night animals.

## GANGRENE AND STITCHES

Lorena, however, was not like her husband. A change of heart was on the horizon, and when she realised how much damage she'd done to John's body she called the emergency services. Police eventually picked his pecker tip up – the piece only amounted to two and a half inches – and put in an ice bucket to chill. John woke up without it before surgery.

As morning stared at the sheets of John's hospital bed, his life was about to change. Gone was the ruptured, blood-spewing, shredded tangle of nerve endings that had formerly held his penis. In its place, after nine hours in which surgeons scratched needles into his raw flesh, was a myriad of stitches clinging to his sewn-on member. Limp and forlorn, the eye was closed; doctors had warned him he would never have sex again. He was told he should expect complications, such as gangrene, which occurs when parts of the body begin to die.

According to the National Health Service typical symptoms of gangrene include swelling of the affected area, extreme pain and bleeding blisters that can produce a smelly, oozing pus. If such a post-surgery infection set in, his penis would eventually go black and drop off, as he was told by doctors.

The first thing that John did when he experienced an erection in hospital after the operation was to ring and inform his mother, who, perhaps unsurprisingly, said she could have been spared that particular detail.



“ HE WAS TOLD TO EXPECT COMPLICATIONS. IF A POST-SURGERY INFECTION SET IN HIS PENIS WOULD EVENTUALLY GO BLACK AND DROP OFF ”



## MEDIA MOLESTATION

John was engulfed by a media-feeding frenzy. He claimed to have bedded 70 women with his restitched digit and eagerly went under the knife again when infamous shock jock Howard Stern paid for its enlargement. John, of course, claimed it made his sex life better than it ever had been, stating, "Being the most famous man to have his penis chopped off does have its advantages. It definitely has not hurt my love life – in fact it improved it." Precisely what bragging about the fame resulting from being mutilated by a woman you've bullied for years says about his allure is another thing entirely.

What's more, while Lorena's attack gave him a sort of celebrity, it is not exactly celebratory. Publications still run stories on the case seemingly for little more than the excuse to make as many penis-related puns as possible at his expense (it is hard to resist). Empathy for, or indeed envy of John, on the other hand, is rarely part of the formula. As recently as 2012 he tweeted, "Single again, so if you ladies wanna know what it's like to date a porn star message me here", as though the lovelies wouldn't be interested in him for his mind.

John made as much as he could of his circumstances. As well as becoming a regular on the Howard Stern radio show, he appeared on numerous television programmes as well as in a few adult films including *Frankenpenis* (1996). That said, this great lover, according to his ex-wife (and in contradiction to her testimony that the attack was "a blur") was so frustrated that she told police she committed the assault in retaliation for his inconsiderate bedsheet manner, saying: "He always have orgasm and he doesn't wait for me to have orgasm. He's selfish. I don't think it's fair, so I pulled back the sheets then and I did it."

Two of John's subsequent marriages lasted for 23 days and two years – not exactly the height of success for the great American spouse. For all his bragging, the incident also left him with night terrors and suicidal thoughts.

## COURTROOM COCK AND BULL

After deliberation, the court found Lorena not guilty by reason of temporary insanity. Court witnesses confirmed that Lorena had often been covered in bruises, and psychology specialists agreed she had been domestically abused and had become depressed as a result. As a result of the way she recalled the incident later as "pictures", or flashbacks, some medical professionals concluded she had Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder as a result of her husband's behaviour. According to them, John had pushed her to commit the attack – what they called an 'irresistible impulse' through his mistreatment of her.

Lorena was sentenced to a period of evaluation in a psychiatric hospital to adjudicate whether or not she posed a danger to herself. She was subsequently released on the condition that she



received outpatient therapy and did not leave the state without legal permission. As Lorena came from a strict Roman Catholic family, who saw divorce as failure, the couple tried to reignite their marriage. She alleges John continued to beat her and they split in 1995.

Lorena has also apologised for her crime. She told *The Daily Mail*, "It was done but it was not done on purpose" and has commented on the outcomes of the accepted nature of spousal abuse, saying, "It's sad because domestic violence put me and my ex-husband in the hospital." John's eventual response? "I don't blame Lorena. We both hurt each other. I wish her the best." According to Lorena, he continued to send her Valentine's Day cards for another decade.

Love is possible, however. Following her acquittal, Lorena has found a man who adores her and treats her properly. The couple are raising their child together. This determined lady has also since become an advocate for domestic violence survivors, establishing (in her unmarried name) The Lorena Gallo Foundation. Based in Haymarket, Virginia, it organises outreach and charitable donation drives.

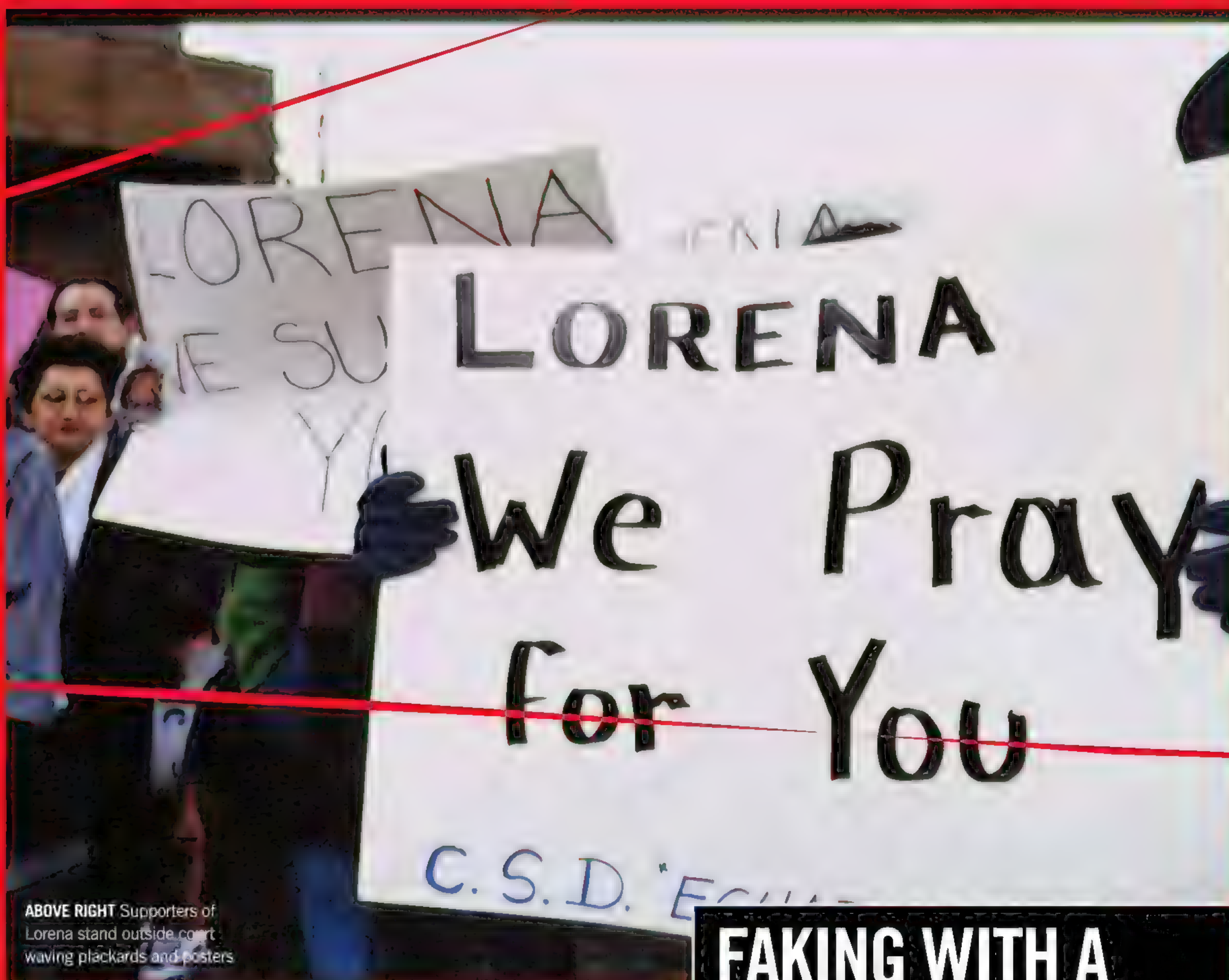
John has since attempted to become a real man. Trying to take responsibility for his actions,

he has converted to Christianity and has a limo business. For all the tomfoolery, celebrity and indeed cock-and-bull stories that circulated when the incident hit the press, there were serious outcomes. Its newsworthiness enabled it to go some way towards shattering the wall of silence that had surrounded domestic violence and showed via Lorena's acquittal that threats from spouses should not be tolerated.

The ultimate outcome for a story almost perfectly conected for the front pages is its long-term legacy: John will gradually fade into obscurity in the pit that is internet porn. Lorena, on the other hand, will influence the families she helps for years and probably generations to come.







**ABOVE RIGHT** Supporters of Lorena stand outside court waving placards and posters

## FAKING WITH A FRANKENPENIS

JOHN WAYNE BOBBITT REHASHED HIS LIFE STORY IN ADULT FILMS TO GAIN EXPOSURE AND PAY MEDICAL BILLS

*John Wayne Bobbitt Uncut* was filmed just a year after the attack that cost him his penis. A different kind of revision is visible in the narrative that recounts the events of that night. After a rather childish John is seen making goggles out of a stripper's bra on that drunken night out, he goes home to Lorena (Veronica Brazil) and pesters her for sex. Their argument is completely removed from the narrative.

When he is asleep, 'Lorena' (in nothing but lacy panties) berates John for sleeping with other women and begs him to become erect while she holds a knife aloft. Suspenseful, rhythmic music kicks in as the full-frontal shot goes slow-mo for the otherwise out-of-eyeline slash.

The penis is eventually thrown in the path of an Englishman who delivers the line, "Looks like a dick! F\*\*king hell! It's not mine at least!", with deadpan aplomb. It's oddly appropriate that musician Lemmy Kilmister would pop up in that cameo – he changed the world with his Motorhead.



**ABOVE** John slumps with his head in his hands as he listens to evidence in court



# NO “GOOD DEED” GOES UNPUNISHED!

A CONNECTICUT MAN ALLEGEDLY MISTOOK AN OLD MAN FOR A HOMELESS PERSON, ‘ACCIDENTALLY’ KIDNAPPED HIM AND FORCE-FED HIM MEAT

**A** 57-year-old man from Danbury, Connecticut, was arrested in 2015 after allegedly accidentally kidnapping an elderly gentleman whom he had confused for a homeless person.

David Pope came across an old man (who will remain nameless) pushing a shopping trolley filled with cans and bottles down his street and allegedly mistook the man for a homeless person who was in need of a good meal.

At 6.30pm on 26 August, Pope apparently decided to play the Good Samaritan. He took the 77 year old by the arm, dragged him into his home and attempted to feed him dinner. But the misunderstanding led to Pope being arrested and charged with second-degree kidnapping.

The victim's already bizarre evening continued to go downhill. Once inside his kidnapper's house, the man was bitten on the leg by Pope's Staffordshire terrier. He was then given something to eat. Though the dog broke skin and drew blood, Pope continued to force-feed pieces of meat to his victim, terrifying the old man.

From Pope's perspective, he was simply feeding a man in need, helping someone who couldn't help themselves and doing his bit to give back to the community. But his victim saw it another way – he had been forcibly dragged off the street away from his shopping and taken into a strange house to be stuffed full of meat and used as a dog's chew toy.

Eventually, the victim managed to escape from the house without Pope seeing. Limping to the safety of his own home and phoning the police immediately to report his ordeal and put in a complaint against Pope.

Detective Lieutenant Christian Carraccio of the Danbury Police Department said the victim explained that he continued to eat the food Pope







NO "GOOD DEED"

**“ THE VICTIM CONTINUED TO EAT POPE’S FOOD BECAUSE HE WAS ‘AFRAID FOR HIS LIFE AND AFRAID THE DOG WOULD BITE HIM AGAIN’ ”**

was giving to him because he was understandably “afraid for his life and afraid the dog would bite him again”.

Officers followed up the report and went to speak with Pope, but the officers were unable to safely interview as the desperate do-gooder refused to put his badly behaved dog away for the entirety of the visit. According to the police report, Pope appeared to be visibly intoxicated and belligerent and they quickly took him into custody.

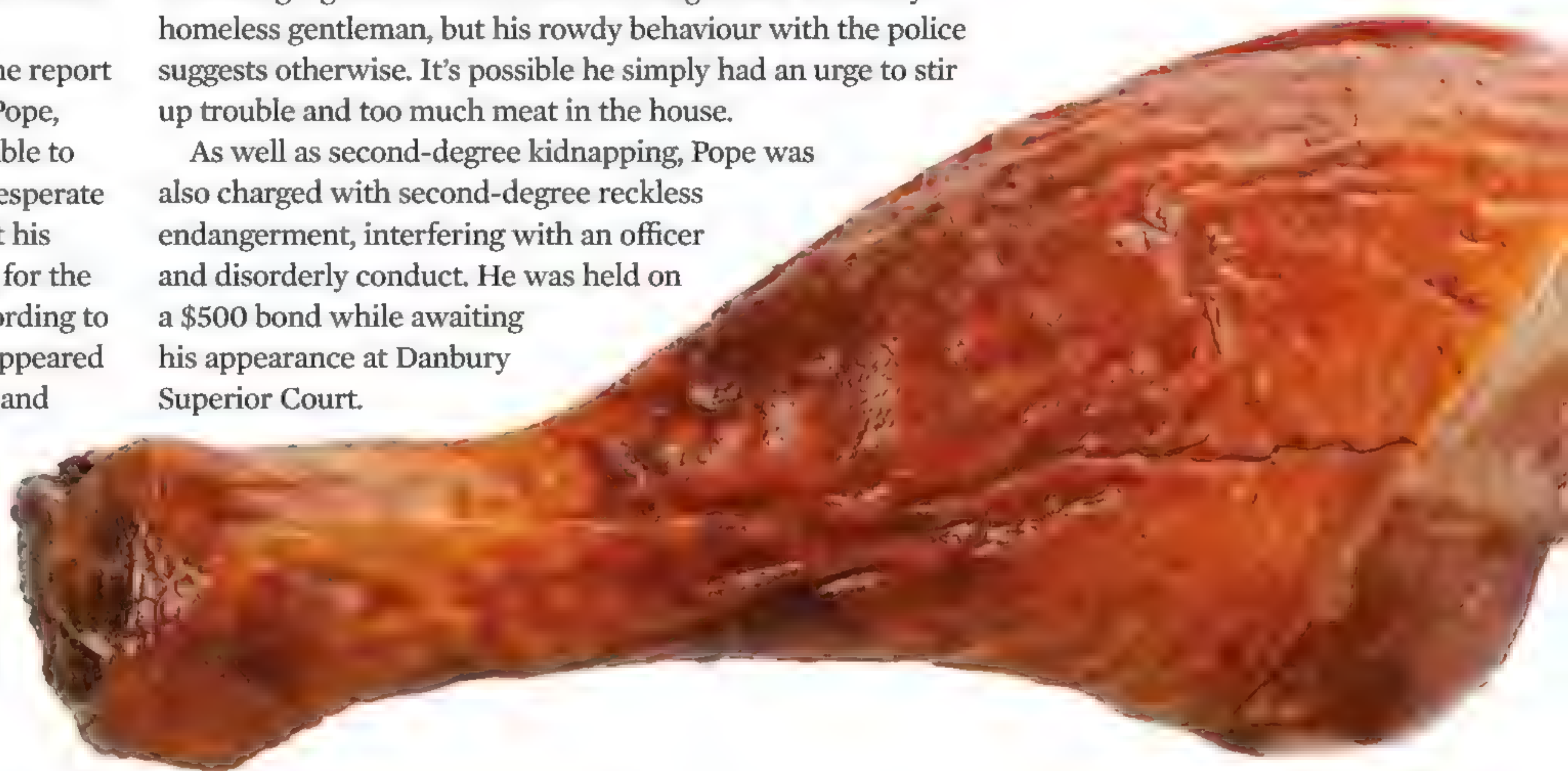
Pope claimed that he thought his victim was homeless and had invited the man

into his house because he wanted to offer him food. At this stage it’s unclear whether or not Pope actually believed he was doing a good deed for what he thought was an elderly homeless gentleman, but his rowdy behaviour with the police suggests otherwise. It’s possible he simply had an urge to stir up trouble and too much meat in the house.

As well as second-degree kidnapping, Pope was also charged with second-degree reckless endangerment, interfering with an officer and disorderly conduct. He was held on a \$500 bond while awaiting his appearance at Danbury Superior Court.

**OPPOSITE** Drunken do-gooder David Pope claimed he dragged a 77-year-old man back to his home and force-fed him meat because he believed the man was homeless

**ABOVE** Xxxxxx that this popular Irish export works better on toast or inside a baked potato





# HOTEL OF HORRORS

IT STANDS 19 FLOORS HIGH, A BLOOD-SOAKED EYESORE IN THE HEART OF DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES. HOW HAS THE CECIL HOTEL EARNED ITS INFAMOUS REPUTATION?

WORDS JOANNA ELPHICK

**I**n 2017, Stay on Main, formally the Cecil Hotel, closed its doors in order to completely renovate the building, but it seems that no matter how many times the place is rebranded and given a new lick of paint, it just can't shake its macabre reputation.

Hotel entrepreneur William Banks Hanner and his associates Robert H. Schops and Charles L. Dix had such high hopes when The Cecil Hotel was completed. The great and the good, politicians and Hollywood stars, stood shoulder to shoulder, all marvelling at the stained-glass windows and marble flooring as the lobby doors were proudly flung open on that cold December evening in 1924. Gleaming white statues welcomed guests as they approached the magnificent, and now infamous, terracotta archway entrance, while exotic palms decorated the elegant mezzanine. Having sunk over \$2.5 million into the project, they needed the hotel to be a success, and for the first few years it was. But even during its glory days, an insidious undercurrent began to take hold.

**RIGHT** The Cecil Hotel, with its flaking paint sign, has been named a Historic Cultural Monument, much to the horror of nearby residents

© Getty Images



# Hotel Cecil

LOW  
DAILY  
WEEKLY  
RATES  
700 ROOMS





## THE FINAL CHECK-OUT

The first of several hotel suicides occurred three years after the grand hotel opening, when 52-year-old real estate-dealer Percy Ormand Cook ended his life on 22 January 1927. Having been separated from his wife and child due to marital difficulties, Cook decided to end it all by shooting himself in the brain. Housekeeping staff at the hotel discovered his bloody corpse slumped in his room and called for an ambulance, but the heartbroken husband died from his wounds that night.

The stock market crash of 1929, followed by the beginning of the Great Depression, rocked the U.S., but somehow the Cecil Hotel continued to thrive well into the 1940s with its clientele of wealthy theatre-goers, travelling businessmen and minor celebrities. Meanwhile, just around the corner, Skid Row was growing.

The name 'Skid Row' derives from the first railroad construction sites in the mid 19th century, where skid roads were made to shift the felled tree logs. The transient workers, far from home, spent their earnings on the brothels and taverns that sprang up around them, quick to cater to men with cash and no families to spend it on. When the seasonal work dried up, the men often ended up sleeping rough on the streets, drunk and disillusioned. As the Great Depression took hold of the U.S., desperate men travelled from across

**ABOVE** The once grand golden entrance to Cecil Hotel is now more synonymous with death and tragedy

**TOP RIGHT** The Night Stalker, Richard Ramirez, was said to have stayed at the Cecil Hotel, discarding his bloodied clothing in the dumpster before entering the lobby

the country in the hope of finding food, shelter and work. The majority found nothing more than a makeshift tent on Skid Row. It was a hopeless place then, and continues to be a desperate area today – its population continues to grow, a home for everyone from unwanted Vietnam veterans of the 1970s to the mentally ill and drug addicted L.A. underbelly that never achieved the American Dream. The creeping tendrils of the nearby Skid Row would eventually find their way to the Cecil Hotel, setting a dangerous standard for its future occupants.

In 1931, four years after the untimely end of Percy Cook, a second suicide took place. Eerily similar to the Lams' frantic search for their daughter 80 years later, a panic-stricken Mrs Norton reported her husband missing from their home in Manhattan Beach, L.A. at the beginning of November. His body was discovered 19 days later by a maid working at the hotel. 46-year-old W. K. Norton had checked in as 'Mr James Willys' and had promptly gone up to his room and taken a handful of poison-filled capsules.

A year later, 25-year-old Benjamin Dodich checked into the Cecil Hotel only to permanently check out by firing a bullet into his right temple. This tragic run of suicides continued, and by 1962, nine more guests had ended their lives. Louis D. Borden slashed his own throat, Erwin C. Neblett and Dorothy Sceiger used poison, while six desperate



66 THE CREEPING TENDRILS OF THE NEARBY SKID ROW WOULD EVENTUALLY FIND THEIR WAY TO THE CECIL HOTEL 99

## BORN AND DIED AT CECIL

### "ALMOST BEYOND BELIEF"

The saddest death of all occurred on 8 September 1944, several days after a couple checked in to the hotel. Heavily pregnant Dorothy Jean Purcell awoke during the night with violent stomach pains. The baby was on its way. Her boyfriend, Ben Levine, was sound asleep, so, in order not to wake him, she decided to get up and make her way to the communal bathroom on the same floor. Laying on the grubby tiles, she then proceeded to give birth to a little boy. Purcell later claimed that the baby was unresponsive, and thinking the child dead, she opened the bathroom window and threw him out into the night. The boy had in fact been alive at the time, his lungs filled with air.



**MURDER COMPLAINT**—Dorothy Jean Purcell, 19, whom Coroner's jury recommended be held to answer on charge of throwing her newborn baby to his death from window of downtown hotel. She is in a hospital prison ward.

## Mother Held After Baby Found Thrown to Death

After hearing testimony that the young woman had for several days occupied a hotel room with Ben Levine, 38, shoe salesman. She awakened, Jones quoted her as saying, early one morning to learn the baby was about to be born. Not desiring to awaken her



individuals leapt to their death from the hotel roof or out of the window.

In 1962, Pauline Otton's death became shrouded in mystery. She and her husband had been having marital difficulties, but the pair decided to talk about a new start together. Having checked in, the reconciliation was apparently going well, but when Mr Otton left the hotel to look for a restaurant, his wife plummeted out of the ninth-floor window. No one could tell whether she jumped or was pushed, but unfortunately she landed on top of George Gianinni, who was walking directly beneath her window. It seemed that merely being in the vicinity of the Cecil Hotel increased the likelihood of an untimely end.

Further suspicious deaths and tragic suicides followed, and the dark mythology surrounding the Cecil Hotel continued to grow.

### THE MURDER MAGNET

In the summer of 2003, an unidentified man was discovered in one of the hotel rooms. He had been strangled, his body discarded on the floor beside the bed. But this John Doe was



not the first victim to be found in the Cecil Hotel, and his killer was certainly not the only murderer to walk through the lobby and stalk its corridors.

As time progressed and the fortunes of the initially elegant hotel diminished, the 700 rooms were split up into those offered out to tourists and those given over to single-room residents. For a minimal fee, almost anyone could make the Cecil Hotel their home, and it quickly gained a reputation as a place to 'disappear', since nobody there seemed to care or ask any questions.

In 1964, Goldie Osgood, a 65-year-old retired telephone operator, had fallen on hard times and ended up renting a room at the hotel. She was known to have been a kind and gentle lady, nicknamed 'Pigeon Goldie' because of her love of birds. Every day she made her way to Pershing Square in Downtown L.A. where she fed the pigeons and chatted to the passers-by. In this way she had become something of a local celebrity. Her end was therefore all the more shocking when a phone directory deliveryman discovered her stabbed, strangled and raped body slumped in her room. An unemployed labourer, Jacques B. Ehlinger, was initially arrested, having been spotted outside the hotel that night, covered in blood. However, with little more in the way of evidence, Ehlinger was released, and Pigeon Goldie's murder remains unsolved to this day.

During the 1980s, Skid Row became a seething pit of prostitution, drug-taking and general degradation. The poor and underprivileged rubbed shoulders with violent ex-offenders, all living on the streets, making it the largest settled population of homeless people in the U.S. This chaotic environment was a perfect hiding place and hunting ground for two infamous serial killers. Richard Ramirez, nicknamed 'The Night Stalker', reportedly lived on the top floor of the Cecil Hotel during his reign of fear. For a mere \$14 per night, Ramirez could slip unnoticed in and out of the hotel, carrying out his horrific crimes. The self-confessed Satanist terrorised the people of Los Angeles from June 1984 to the end of August 1985, when an angry mob eventually cornered him in



**ABOVE** Missing posters of Elisa Lam became a regular site on lampposts and chain-link fences all across Downtown Los Angeles

**TOP-RIGHT** The Cecil Hotel was rebranded 'Stay on Main' in order to differentiate between the seedy single-occupancy apartments where Skid Row regulars sometimes slept, and the vacationing tourists' rooms

**“ SKID ROW BECAME A SEETHING PIT OF PROSTITUTION ”**

an L.A. suburb, beating the killer to the ground. During his hunting days, Ramirez murdered at least 13 people, killing the men and raping the women and children before tossing away their lifeless bodies. His crimes were brutal and ferocious, often leaving him soaked in his victims' blood. This posed a

## ELISA'S STRANGE BEHAVIOUR

FOUR MINUTES OF BIZARRE FOOTAGE WENT VIRAL OVERNIGHT



### 1 HIDES IN CORNER OF LIFT

Elisa appears nervous, and, having peeped out into the hallway, hides in the corner of the lift. She pushes lots of buttons and can't get the lift doors to close.



### 2 REPEATEDLY ENTERS AND EXITS LIFT

She exits the lift when the doors fail to close, having inadvertently pushed the 'hold' button. She seems to be talking to someone in the hallway.



problem for the killer, who needed to quickly melt into the shadows. The Cecil Hotel was a perfect location to avoid detection. After all, with hobos slumped in the doorways and drug addicts collapsing on the pavement, nobody was going to notice a sleazy young man dressed in soiled clothes, slipping up to his secret lair.

An ex-clerk came forward after Ramirez was captured, stating that he recognised the murderer as a regular visitor at the hotel. When asked why the clerk had not reported the man, who often appeared late at night in the hotel lobby in his underwear (and occasionally naked), he replied that a filthy, nude man was not an unduly odd sight at the Cecil Hotel. The 'Devil's Disciple' as Ramirez was also known, was just one of many strange and repellent guests. Police believed he returned to Skid Row, before stripping off his blood-soaked clothes and tossing them in a hotel dumpster and taking the lift up to the top floor.

In October 1990, after serving 15 years for the murder of a teenage girl, Jack Unterweger was given early release after reinventing himself as a literary genius. Having written a semi-autobiographical best-seller and numerous literary reviews, he walked the streets of Austria a free man. The public adored the charming, erudite man, but the police remained suspicious. As he travelled across Europe, the death rate of local prostitutes increased. During the spring of 1991 he murdered six young women, before moving on to Los Angeles. Unterweger was so charismatic that he managed to convince the LAPD to let him ride along with them on their Skid Row patrols, to supposedly better understand the plight of the poor, neglected sex workers of Los Angeles. He told anyone who cared to listen that he was writing an exposé of the appalling conditions and dangerous lifestyle of an American prostitute. The police were happy to oblige.

Unterweger needed a basecamp, somewhere to bring the women in order to 'interview' them. He also needed a place to hide. The Cecil Hotel was the perfect location. The Skid Row prostitutes knew the place well, as it was the obvious choice for a client with a little spare cash who wanted a



2x © Alamy



### 3 EXITS AND WAVES ARMS ABOUT

She is captured moving her hands and arms in a strange fashion. She is possibly experiencing a bipolar-induced hallucination, since she is off her medication.



### 4 ELISA VANISHES, DOORS CLOSE

The doors appear to take on a life of their own, but this is because the 'hold' button is released and the lift reacts to the pushed buttons. Elisa leaves.

4x © CBS



## 66 POLICE WERE STUMPED, SO IN A DESPERATE BID FOR INFORMATION, THEY RELEASED FURTHER SURVEILLANCE FOOTAGE

better experience than paid sex in a makeshift tent. Since drug addicts and sex workers lined the streets and slept in the doorways surrounding the hotel, the clerks and bellhops barely noticed when the guests 'entertained' in their rooms.

During his brief stay, Unterweger took three prostitutes – Shannon Exley, Irene Rodriguez and Peggy Jean Booth – back to his hotel room. There, the three women were systematically beaten and sexually assaulted with a tree branch, before being strangled to death with their own bras. Eventually the monster was caught by police, and he was convicted of murdering nine women. He hanged himself in his cell in June 1994.

## THE ELISA LAM CONSPIRACY

In 2011, the Cecil Hotel was rebranded 'Stay on Main' in a desperate bid to shake off its negative reputation. Things appeared to settle down for a while, but in 2013 it found itself at the centre of yet another mystery.

When Elisa Lam, a 21-year-old student from Canada went missing, nobody took much notice until the press noted that her last known whereabouts had been The hotel. Surveillance cameras clearly showed the young woman entering the building, but no footage ever showed her leaving. Elisa's medication, luggage, clothes and I.D. remained untouched in her room. The police scoured the building, checking all the floors, searching each and every room, but the woman seemed to have literally vanished. Elisa had initially checked into one of the hotel's hostel-style shared rooms, but after a number of her roommates complained about her odd behaviour, she was moved to a room by herself. Earlier in the week, security men had forcibly removed her from a television recording session due to her unruly conduct. Clearly Elisa had been acting irrationally.

The police were stumped, so in a desperate bid for information, they released further surveillance footage of Elisa taken by a camera in one of the lifts. The strange images captured on film quickly went viral, and a host of amateur sleuths and conspiracy theorists began a bizarre quest to discover the missing woman. As the theories espoused became more and more farfetched – including paranormal activities, video manipulation and governmental cover-ups – the police began to build a solid picture of their missing person, determined to solve the mystery and put a stop to the wild speculation buzzing around on social media.

Internet sleuths desperately tried to link her disappearance with a tuberculosis test (coincidentally named 'Lam-Elisa') that had been undertaken at the time, but the truth was far more tragic than any YouTuber could have imagined. Elisa Lam had been mentally ill for some time, and although she had felt strong enough to travel the world alone, in truth she needed the support of her family to ensure that she continued to take her medication for her bipolar disorder.





## TIMELINE

1924

The Cecil Hotel opens its doors for the first time to great excitement.

1927

The first documented suicide takes place in the hotel when Percy Ormond Cook shoots himself.

1929

The Great Depression begins in the U.S., causing a socioeconomic crisis and an increase in homelessness on Skid Row.

1940S

During World War II, the hotel prospers as an elegant retreat, despite its increasingly seedy location.

1985

Serial killer Richard Ramirez stays at the Cecil while terrorising Los Angeles residents.

1991

Serial killer Jack Unterwieser brings three of his victims back to his room at the Cecil Hotel.

2011

In a desperate bid to lose its grim reputation, Cecil Hotel is rebranded 'Stay on Main'.

2013

Elisa Lam disappears while staying at the hotel, sparking a worldwide conspiracy theory.

2014

The hotel is sold for \$30 million, and renovation begins.

2017

The Cecil Hotel is voted a Historic Cultural Monument, to the shock of local residents.

When police officers searched through her social media posts they witnessed the apparently worsening mental state of the young woman.

Complaints about foul-tasting water in the rooms appeared to be an unrelated incident. The water pressure had dropped and guests at the hotel didn't like the look of the tainted water when they ran a bath. When a maintenance worker finally lifted the lid on a rooftop water tank and found a lifeless corpse floating inside, two mysteries were simultaneously solved.

To this day no one is sure how Elisa Lam managed to bypass the alarm system on the exit door and make her way up to the water tank, before climbing in and closing the lid behind her, but somehow that's exactly what she did. While conspiracy theorists continued to make ridiculous paranormal links, the police officially closed the case in June of that year. The cause of death was noted as accidental drowning. Her bipolar disorder was given as a significant factor, since it was discovered during her autopsy that she had not been taking the correct dosage of her medication. The lost woman had become the latest tragic guest of the Cecil Hotel.

## THE CECIL TODAY

In 2017 the Cecil Hotel was declared a Historic Cultural Monument by the Los Angeles City Council, on the basis that it is a fine example of the Beaux Arts style of architecture. Eyebrows were raised at the dubious choice, but perhaps this honour is the start of a new lease of life for a hotel that has become synonymous with death and destruction. Just like a lingering bad smell, Cecil's reputation is going to be difficult to exorcise, but hopefully, with time, the gruesome memories will fade.

There is a strong argument to suggest that the hotel never actually deserved the bad publicity and grim monikers, which have ranged from 'Suicide Hub' to the 'Mouth of Hell'. Certainly, the Cecil Hotel has seen its fair share of misery and pain, but to call the hotel a suicide hotspot is somewhat farfetched. Although there has been little in the way of research on suicide locations, it does appear that people wishing to end their own lives often choose a hotel over their own home. One survey concluded that individuals are 20 times more likely to commit suicide away from home, in a hotel or motel, while a crime-scene-cleaning firm in San Francisco released a statement claiming that the hotel industry was its biggest clients by far.

Murders are far less likely to occur, but they do happen. Clearly the location of the hotel, close to one of the most deprived areas of Los Angeles, was a major factor in it being chosen and used by killers such as Richard Ramirez, so rather than pointing the Grim Reaper's finger at the Cecil Hotel, it would be more sensible to take a look at its surroundings. Death is an everyday occurrence on Skid Row, where drug addicts rub shoulders with desperate and sick individuals. The death of Pigeon Goldie shocked Los Angeles and added fuel to the myth of the Cecil Hotel's dark history, but nobody mentions the macabre and equally tragic discovery of Mrs Viva Brown, who was murdered in an entirely different hotel just around the corner.

So, while it may be easy to paint the Cecil Hotel as an insidious hellhole, it is more accurate to say that the entire area is a dangerous and threatening location – one to be avoided when picking your next family vacation.

**ABOVE** A maintenance worker inspects one of the water tanks where Elisa Lam was discovered

**LEFT** The desperate situation of those living on Skid Row has deeply affected the ambiance of the Cecil Hotel and brought in some highly dubious clients



**OPPOSITE** In court, Deputy District Attorney Kandace Gerdes said that Robert Young (right, top) and Mark Rubinson (right, bottom) had made a series of bad decisions concerning their deceased friend

**RIGHT** The bizarre tale of two men who took their buddy's dead body on a joyride and left him to pick up the tab reminded many of the cult '80s comedy film *Weekend At Bernie's*

# WEEKEND AT JEFFREY'S

IN SCENES THAT RESEMBLED THE EVENTS OF THE 1980S CULT COMEDY *WEEKEND AT BERNIE'S*, TWO MEN BUNDLED THEIR BUDDY'S CORPSE INTO THEIR CAR FOR A JOY RIDE BEFORE USING HIS CREDIT CARD TO PAY FOR THEIR WILD NIGHT OUT

In 2011, 43-year-old Robert Jeffrey Young was living with an old friend, Jeffrey Jarrett, in Denver, Colorado. On the evening of 27 August, Young returned to the home the two shared to find his friend unconscious and unresponsive. Young hurried to the nearby restaurant where he worked and sought out 25-year-old Mark Rubinson, bringing him back to the address.

Bernie would be the perfect host, except for one thing: he's dead. Now, he's the life of the party



A lively comedy about a guy who isn't.

GLADDEN ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS A VICTOR DRAI PRODUCTION  
ANDREW MCCARTHY • JONATHAN SILVERMAN • WE



the small thing...  
party.

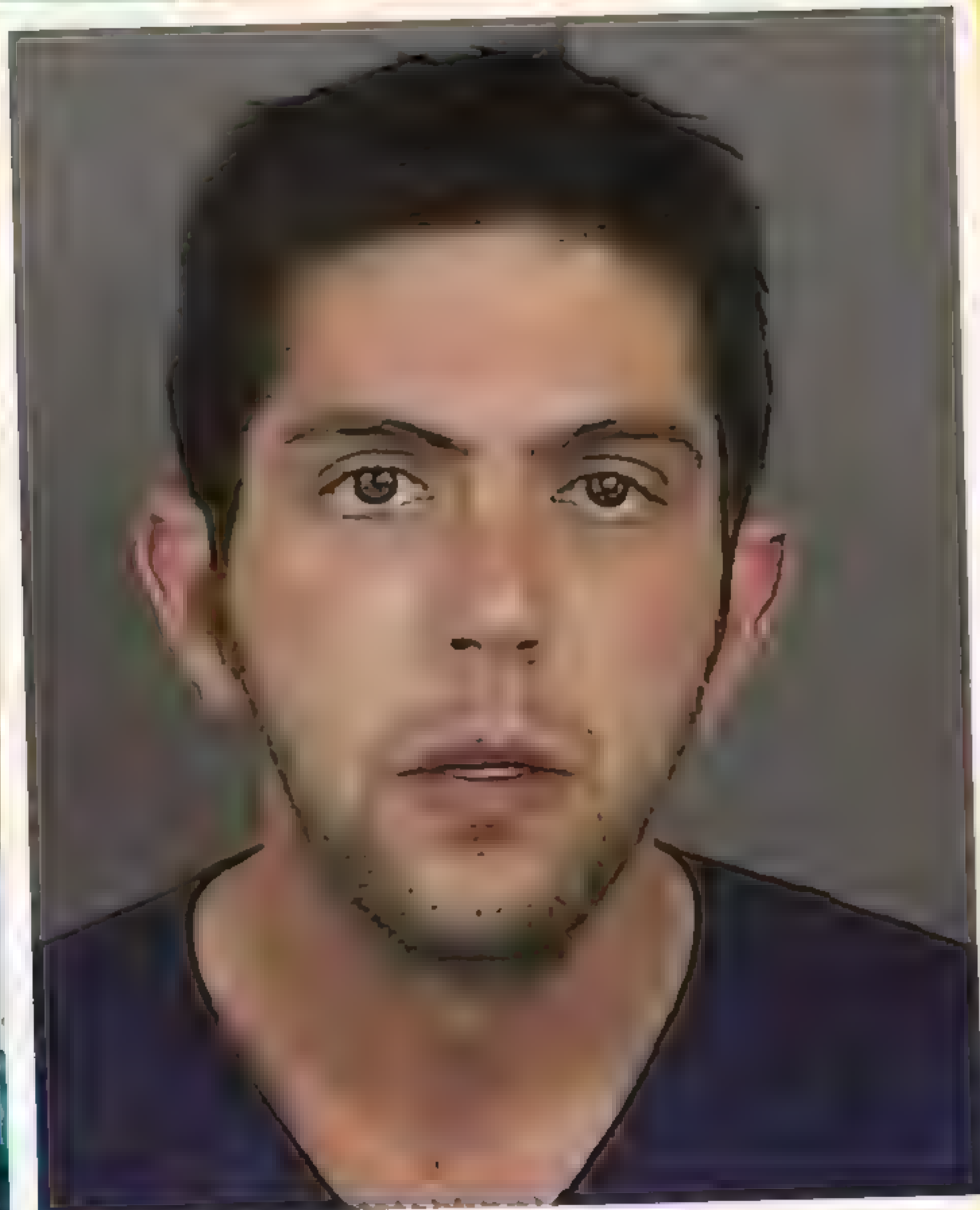


ON A TED KOTCHEFF FILM  
WEEKEND AT BERNIE'S

Xxxx xxxx xxxan easy grin and notable lack of worry-lines despite his age, Edward Baldock was the council worker Wigginton murdered



WEEKEND AT JEFFREY'S



Claiming to think their friend was only passed out, not in fact dead, the pair tossed Jarrett's body into the back of Robinson's Lincoln Navigator SUV and went for a drive, instead of calling for help. On their jaunt, they made a number of stops around the area, including at Teddy T's Bar and Grill and Sam's No. 3 for some breakfast.

While Young and Robinson partied, Jarrett's corpse was left in the car. However, his wallet accompanied the two friends on their jaunt as they racked up the expenses on Jarrett's credit card. The pair then said they realised that Jarrett was in fact dead and returned home to tuck him into bed, but instead of calling the police, the pair continued to drive around town. They stopped for gas and at a burrito bar all courtesy of their deceased friend, before their final destination, strip club Shotgun Willie's. Here, they took a tab out on the deceased's card and withdrew \$400 from an ATM.

As they left the club, one of the men told a valet and a Glendale police officer that, "They were driving around with a dead guy and they didn't know what to do with it and they were just going to go home really fast." The police officer, hearing the quirky story, alerted officers who found Jarrett's body at his home. Despite Robinson's claims that he thought Jarrett had passed out from drinking, the police said that Young had admitted to them that he knew he was dead from the first stop they had made that night.

The pair were arrested, and although they were not charged with Jarrett's death, they were charged with abducting a corpse and fraudulently using his credit card. Police say they did not have the consent of their friend to do so in his absence. Young posted a bond of \$2,500 while Robinson posted a \$3,500 bond. Both men were brought back to Denver County Court in September and October respectively for a preliminary hearing. A local Denver news channel compared the incident to the 1980s comedy flick *Weekend At Bernie's*, where two friends arrive at their boss's luxury pad in The Hamptons only to find him dead, but carry on the party anyway.

Prior to sentencing, both pled guilty to abducting a corpse while Young admitted to identity theft. The pair appeared back in court on 8 March 2012 for sentencing, where Robinson received two years of probation and Young faced one year of probation. They were also ordered to partake in community service and undergo mental health and substance abuse evaluations.



# Mad Mysteries

POLICE LINE



**94** **TORTURED BY TENANT?**

THE TRAGIC MURDER OF OAKLEY "AL" KITE

**100** **THE CURIOUS CASE OF THE CIRCLEVILLE LETTERS**

HOW POISONED PEN LETTERS DROVE A PICTURE PERFECT OHIO TOWN INTO A SOAP OPERA SAGA

**106** **THE DALI MURDERS**

DID THE LEGENDARY SURREALIST ARTIST INSPIRE A SERIAL KILLER?

**110** **CANNIBAL TROUBLE IN PARADISE**

WHAT HAPPENED TO MICHAEL ROCKEFELLER?

NE DO NOT CROSS

**94**

SCAGOULA, Miss.  
—Police Chief



by friend of Kite...  
had been ordered to go  
the bedroom...  
ere as no evidence...

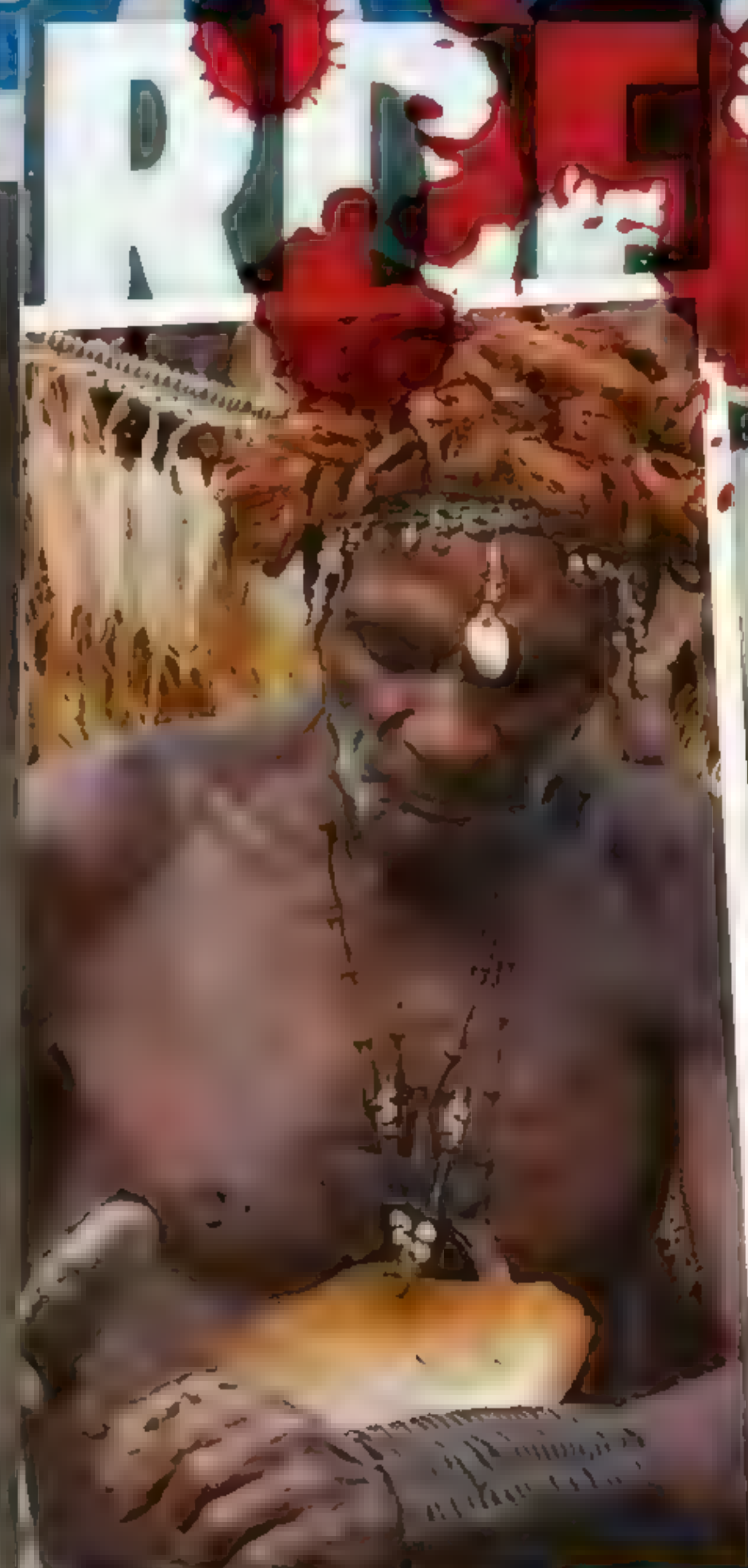


who said **100**  
harm beyond losing t

**106**



He...  
room...



**110**





# TORTURED BY TENANT?

Oakey 'AL' KITE ONLY WANTED A ROOMMATE; INSTEAD, HE MET A SHOCKING AND STILL UNSOLVED DEATH. DID A WANNABE ROOMIE COMMIT BRUTAL MURDER?

WORDS CATHERINE CURZON

Oakey Albert Kite Jr, known as 'Al' to his friends, didn't seem like the sort of man who'd have many enemies. Warm, cheerful and reliable, he was a well-liked and respected employee at the engineering consulting firm in Denver, Colorado, where he earned a living. Kite moved to Colorado in 1998 and it was just the latest stop in a full and adventurous life, which had seen his work as a project accountant take him across the United States and even the world. He had a passion for outdoor pursuits and though his one marriage had failed, he and his ex-wife remained on friendly terms. Though his employer of more than three decades was forced to let Kite go during a period of downsizing, he swiftly found another job in which he instantly became a hit with co-workers. In many ways, his seemed to be a charmed life.

## LOOKING FOR A ROOMIE

Kite's home was a well-appointed two-storey townhouse in a sought-after area, perfectly situated for Interstate-225 and nestled between a state park and an Air Force base. Kite had often remarked that his house was too big for one

man who preferred to spend time outdoors, so soon after moving in, he converted his basement into a self-contained apartment, which quickly gained a long-term tenant. Kite even got a girlfriend named Linda Angelopulos and things were serious. He couldn't ask for more. The only hitch on the horizon came when his tenant handed in his notice, but Kite didn't think there was much to worry about. He advertised locally for a new tenant and soon applications came in. One applicant, named Robert Cooper, stood out among the others. Newly arrived from the East Coast to work at Wells Fargo, he was bedding down at his sister's home and desperately needed to find a more permanent arrangement. He could pay security and advance rental and seemed like the perfect candidate. Kite decided that Cooper would make the perfect lodger.

When Kite failed to turn up for work on 24 May 2004, his colleagues thought it was odd. It wasn't like Kite to be even a few minutes late, so as the minutes and hours ticked by, they started to get anxious. Multiple calls to Kite's cellphone and his home in Aurora, Colorado, went unanswered, as his co-workers' fears that he might have fallen ill or met with an accident spiralled. Desperate to

**RIGHT** Kite was a respected, well-liked man who seemed to have no enemies. He fell victim to a brutal attack.

**BELOW** For more than 20 years, the murder of Kite has been unsolved. Despite multiple leads, his murderer has so far escaped arrest.





Federal Bureau of  
Investigation



Violent Criminal  
Apprehension Program

**VICAP ALERT**  
**UNKNOWN SUSPECT - UNSOLVED HOMICIDE**  
Attention: Violent Crime / Cold Case / Elder Abuse Unit

**OFFENDER DESCRIPTION**



Witness Sketches of Suspect



ATM Camera Photo of Suspect

Race: White  
Skin Color: Fair/Very Fair  
Sex: Male  
Age: Unknown  
Height: 5'10"  
Weight: 170 - 180 lbs  
Hair: Brown or Black  
Eyes: Brown or Hazel  
Distinguishing Characteristics: Possible  
Eastern European accent  
Agency Case #: 2004-25362

On May 25, 2004, the body of 51 year old Oakes Albert "Al" Kite, Jr. was discovered in the basement of his residence in Aurora, CO. Kite had been bound, beaten, tortured, and

stabbed. Kite's wallet and cell phone were taken from the scene. An unidentified male attempted to use his debit card at an ATM following the murder. Surveillance video from the ATM shows a male wearing a ski mask driving Kite's pickup truck, which was later recovered near Kite's residence. Kite's cell phone was discovered in a pay phone booth.

A male who rented a room from Kite prior to his murder is the primary suspect in this case. The renter, who identified himself as "Robert Cooper," claimed to be from the East Coast and to work for Wells Fargo Bank. He provided false identification and contact information on his rental application. Witnesses generally described the suspect male as white, in his forties or fifties, 5'10", 170 to 180 pounds, with black or brown hair. Witnesses reported that he walked with a limp and used a cane, and another reported that he spoke with a possible Romanian accent.

To provide or request additional information, please contact:  
Det. Jason McDonald, Aurora Police Department, (303) 739-6013,  
jasmcdona@aurora.gov  
FBI VICAP, (800) 634-4097, vicap@fbi.gov

Check VICAP for more information on this case. For more information on VICAP, visit  
www.fbi.gov/vicap or call 1-800-634-4097.

Alert # 2014-01-01, Released 1/16/2014 CN  
To review other VICAP Alerts, please visit www.fbi.gov/vicap





Kite had moved to Colorado because of his work, which had seen him live all over the United States

find their friend, they called the emergency contact he had listed on his personnel file. The name Kite had given the office was that of his sister, Barbara, who resided way across America in Virginia and who, just like Kite's colleagues, hadn't heard from him. With no other way to reach her brother, Barbara called the Aurora Police Department and requested that officers go there to perform a welfare check.

### THE MURDER SCENE

That afternoon, officers from Aurora made the trip over to Kite's townhouse at 2002 South Helena Street to find everything seemingly in order. Their efforts to rouse Kite were met with silence and they decided to force entry in case the 53-year-old needed assistance. Once inside, the officers found the house apparently unoccupied. They searched the building from top to bottom and it was when they reached the basement that they learned the fate of Oakley 'Al' Kite.

Kite was lying face down on the floor of the basement, surrounded by a splatter of blood that extended along the wall and across the ground. An injury to the back of his head led investigators to conclude that he had been attacked while descending the staircase, but that the wound had been intended to incapacitate, not kill. Instead, Kite's assailant had hogtied him with cord, binding his wrists and ankles, then connecting the two sets of ligatures together to render him completely immobile. He had then been tortured for hours, until his killer finished the job by slitting his throat.

After torturing his victim for hours, then ending his life, Kite's killer climbed the basement steps and ate food from the fridge in the main house. The unknown assailant

## Snapshot Prediction Results Phenotype Report



Case #2004-2536



**Snapshot**  
DNA PHENOTYPING

### Contact:

Aurora Police Dept.  
Agent Sobleski: 303-739-6103  
TSOBIESK@auroragov.org

### Sex:

Male ♂

### Age:

Unknown

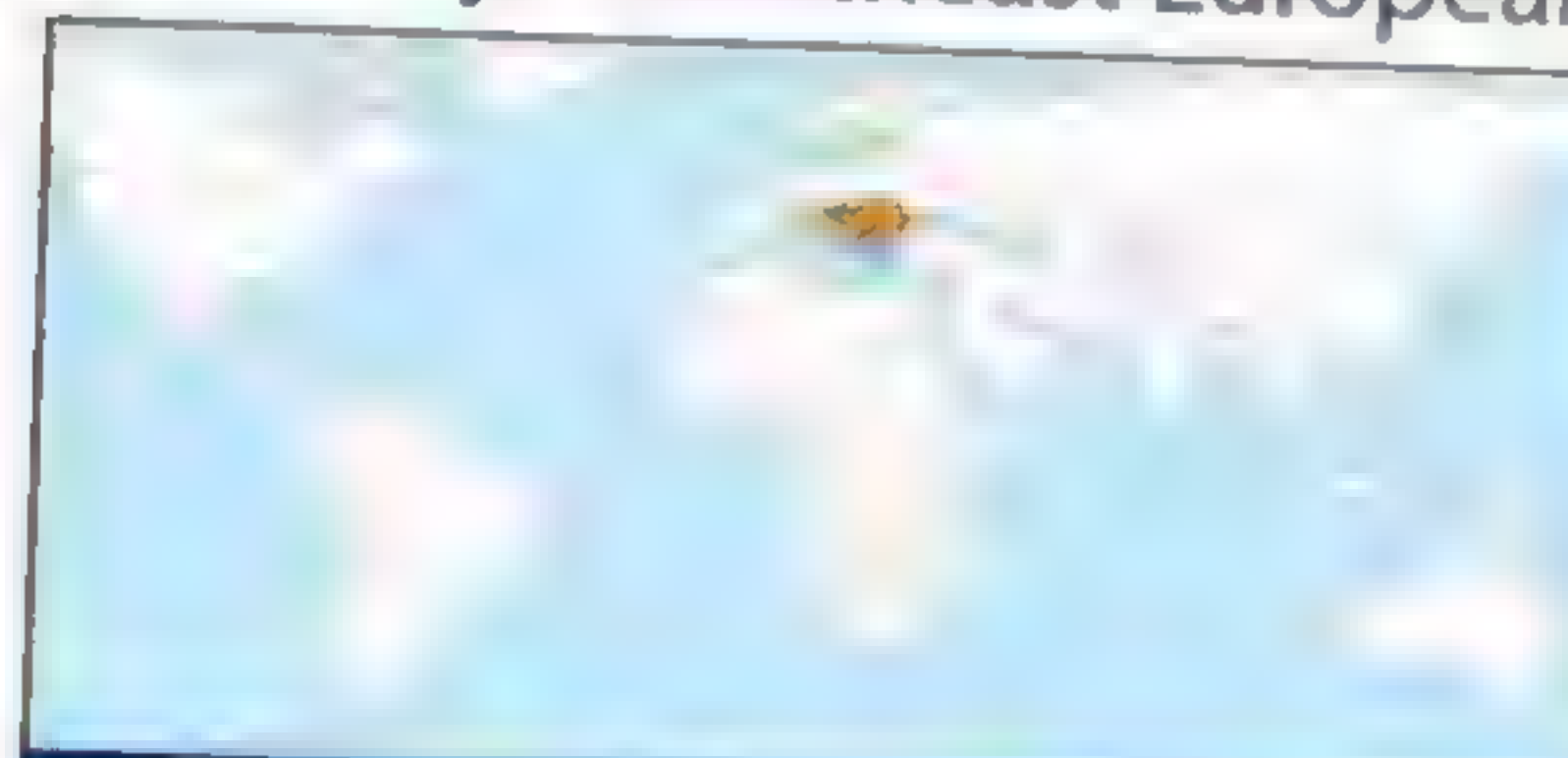
(Shown at age 25)

### Body Mass:

Unknown

(Shown at BMI 22)

### Ancestry: Southeast European



Region	Percent
Europe - Southeast	66.18%
Europe - South	29.96%

### Skin Color

5.9

NOT: Brown / Dark Brown  
(99.3% confidence)

Fair / Very Fair (87.4% confidence)

### Eye Color

NOT: Blue / Green  
(100.0% confidence)

86.3

Brown / Hazel (87.5% confidence)

### Hair Color

NOT: Blond  
(99.8% confidence)

11.7

Brown / Black (99.8% confidence)

### Freckles

36.1

NOT: Many  
(91.7% confidence)

Zero / Few (77.2% confidence)

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<https://Parabon-NanoLabs.com/Snapshot>

then took a shower, slept in Kite's bed and put on some of his clothes. Before departing, they wiped the house down to remove fingerprints, poured bleach down the sink to remove forensic traces and left a collection of knives soaking in a sink filled with bleach, alongside a glass, a pan scrubber, a pen and Kite's car keys. All that was missing were Kite's GMC pick-up and his mobile phone.

As detectives began to piece together the likely story behind Kite's death, they learned that the last person to speak to him had been his girlfriend, Linda. On Saturday 22 May, he had driven her to the airport for a trip to Virginia Beach and she called him at 3.30pm to let him

ABOVE DNA phenotyping technology has enabled investigators to create a snapshot of the suspect, which they hope may eventually help crack the case

OPPOSITE Kite's gravestone marks the resting place of a man who was much loved.

“AFTER TORTURING HIS VICTIM FOR HOURS, THEN ENDING HIS LIFE, KITE'S KILLER ATE FOOD FROM THE FRIDGE IN THE HOUSE”





know that she had arrived safely. Kite was in good spirits and said that he and a neighbour had spent the day doing some maintenance on plumbing in the basement. It was the last confirmed time that anyone spoke to Kite.

## THE TENANT

The case was handed to Detective Thomas Sobieski of the Aurora Police Department, and he wanted to speak to Robert Cooper. Kite's tenant was nowhere to be seen after Kite's murder, but friends remembered Kite commenting that he had offered a recliner to Cooper, who had asked for help moving the furniture downstairs into the basement. Perhaps he had been shifting the recliner when his attacker took him by surprise. They also began a fingertip search of his home, which yielded minute traces of unknown DNA as well as scant fingerprints. Luminol revealed a blood drop that wasn't from Kite on the stairs and further blood stains in the shower and bedroom, not all of them Kite's. In the kitchen rubbish they discovered a handwritten rental application that contained the name, contact detail and social security of Cooper. Needless to say, the references, social security, name and address were all false, though the telephone number did belong to a prepaid burner phone.

Kite's pickup was found parked just a block away from Kite's home and on the seat was an ATM receipt showing

that Kite's ATM card had been used on Saturday evening. When police viewed footage from the ATM camera, they saw a man wearing a ski mask and gloves. He withdrew \$1,000, despite the account containing substantially more. For this reason, detectives ruled out robbery as a motive. After withdrawing the cash, the killer parked the truck then walked back to Kite's home, to place the keys in the sink filled with bleach. The attacker would go on to use Kite's credit cards in the hours between Kite's murder and the discovery of his body. They pinpointed the murder to sometime between 6pm and 10pm on Saturday night.

Investigators were given some short-lived hope when they found that Kite's stolen phone and the burner listed by Cooper were still active, but when they eventually pinpointed the devices, neither was in the killer's possession. Instead they had been dumped in Five Points, a district known for its transient population. The phones had simply been picked up and discarded by the residents who made their home there.

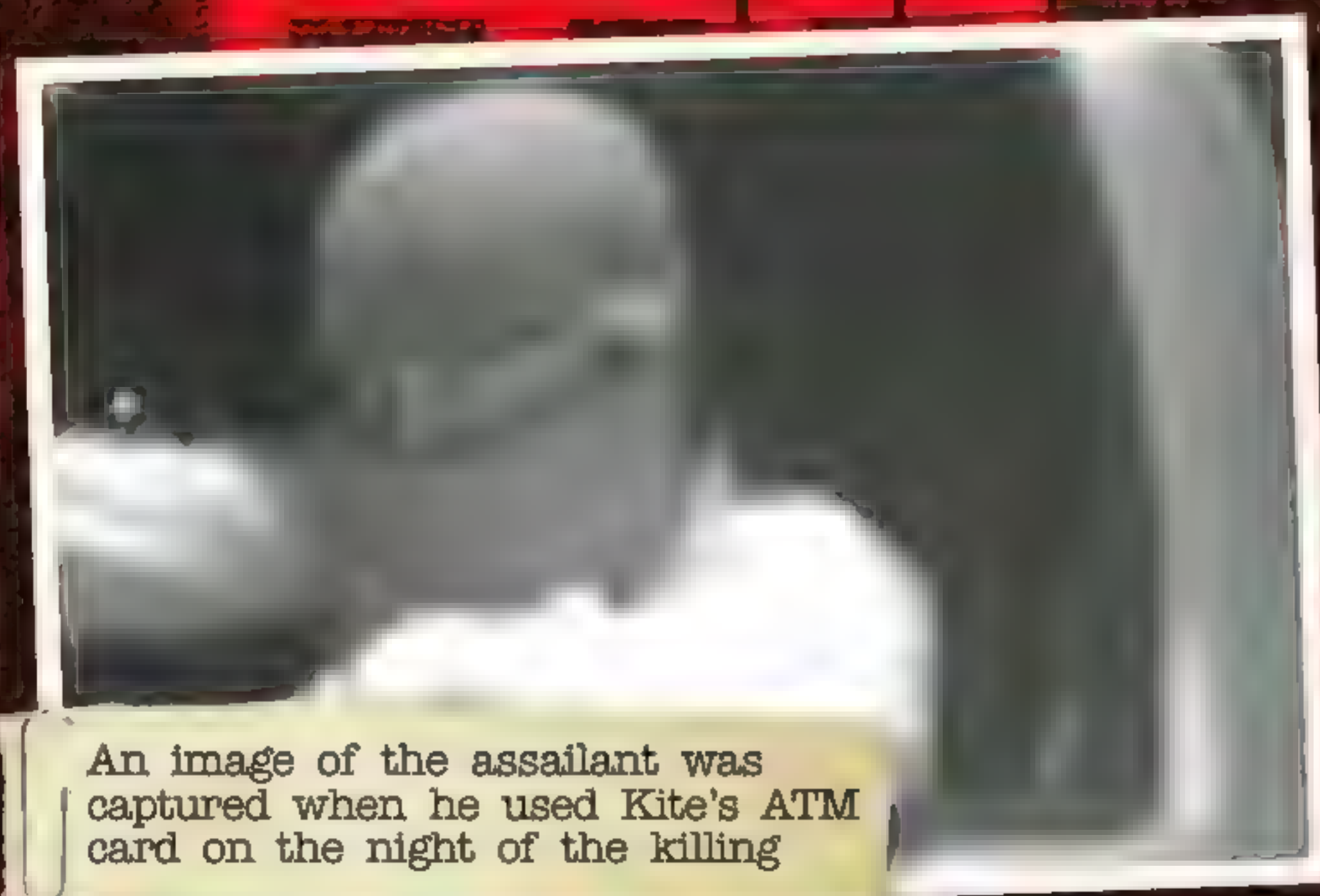
One of the very few leads in the case came when detectives traced the mobile phone purchase to a store near the University of Colorado School of Medicine. Chillingly though, the killer had planned so meticulously that he didn't use the phone until the records for the purchase would no longer be on file. The number had been used on multiple rental applications that promised only the briefest background checks and the fake address on



the application he used for Kite's home was the mailing address of a university building. Intriguingly, many of the applications for property made by Cooper were to rooms advertised only at the University of Colorado library. The killer, it seemed, had a link to the university.

The torture and murder of Kite had been planned and executed for one reason alone: the thrill of it. Because of the meticulous clean up and obfuscation of evidence, detectives reached the conclusion that this was not the first time Cooper had committed murder: the race was on to find him.

Despite Cooper's efforts to remain anonymous, there had been witness sightings of him. Linda briefly glimpsed him in profile when she called in to visit Kite and was given the distinct impression that Cooper didn't want her to see him. He was very well dressed and walked with a limp, supporting himself with a cane. He also had dark curly hair and completely ignored her. She did not, however, get a clear look at his face. According



An image of the assailant was captured when he used Kite's ATM card on the night of the killing

## LAYING A FALSE TRAIL

PERHAPS ONE OF THE MOST CHILLING ASPECTS OF KITE'S MURDER IS THE LENGTHS THE KILLER WENT TO TO LAY A FALSE TRAIL. MULTIPLE WITNESSES DESCRIBE DIFFERENT ACCENTS, WHILE LEAVING THE MOBILE PHONE IN AN AREA KNOWN TO BE FREQUENTED BY TRANSIENTS LED INVESTIGATORS ALONG A DEAD END. FOR THIS REASON, SOME CONSIDER THIS TO BE A PROFESSIONAL KILLING



to Kite he was in his 40s, around 1.8 metres (five feet, eight inches) and 82 kilograms (180 pounds), but when a professor from the University of Colorado reported meeting Cooper when he enquired about a room she was renting, he neither walked with a limp nor carried a cane. He made the woman feel deeply uneasy and had made sexually suggestive comments to her that raised red flags immediately; significantly, he spoke with a distinct Romanian accent. Other witnesses who had met him through property advertisements all described his characteristics differently, with variations on his height, weight and age. Sometimes he limped, sometimes he didn't, sometimes he was American, sometimes European: it was as though he was trying out different personas and characters to find one that worked.

## THREE THEORIES

Kite was laid to rest on 2 June 2004 in his hometown of Halifax, North Carolina. As his family and friends tried to come to terms with his loss and the manner of his death, Aurora detectives continued to investigate the circumstances surrounding his killing, frustrated by the fact that the DNA and fingerprints they had found proved inconclusive. As technology improved, however, they hoped that might change.

Eventually, the police enquiries led investigators to three distinct theories. The first was that Kite's death could have been connected in some way to his work as a senior engineering accountant and department head. Having worked on high profile projects, many including the nuclear industry, they wondered whether this might





## “DETECTIVES ARE BUILDING A FAMILY TREE IN THE HOPE OF IDENTIFYING COOPER”

have made him a target in some way. While this might seem far-fetched, in 1999 Lee Scott Hall, an employee at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, an institution where Kite had also worked, was found beaten and stabbed to death in his home. Hall's car was parked a block away from his home and no items had been stolen. He and Kite had worked at Livermore at the same time, died at home as a result of a brutal attack and were not the victims of robbery. Hall's murder remains unsolved.

The second theory was that the murder was connected to his role as a landlord. Given that the killer made contact with many other potential landlords before renting Kite's basement apartment, this theory certainly seemed to have potential. Kite's murder bore chilling parallels with that of real estate agent Mike Emert, who was beaten and stabbed to death in Seattle in 2001. He was last seen alive when he went to meet a potential client, who just happened to walk with a limp and use a cane. Years later, DNA revealed a potential suspect in former cop turned bank robber, Gary Krueger. However, Krueger had died in 2010, leaving the Emert case unsolved, and Krueger's DNA did not match that found at the murder scene in Aurora.

This was a particularly tantalising theory, since Detective Sobieski's team posited that the care taken in the clean up at Kite's home might point to a former or serving police officer as the perpetrator; certainly, the

killer seemed to know what the police would be looking for and how to frustrate their efforts. However, Detective Sobieski has confirmed that he does not believe the crimes are related, and evidence that has not been made public proves this conclusively.

Most chilling of all is the third theory. In this school of thought, there was no particular reason for the killer to target Kite at all. He was simply unlucky, either the victim of a serial killer targeting and choosing victims according to their own twisted needs, or a test kill for a contract killer. There has even been a potential name put forward in the shape of Israel Keyes, a convicted serial killer who died by suicide in 2012; Keyes has been excluded by DNA testing, however.

### A KILLER'S FAMILY TREE

Though Kite's case remains unsolved, investigations continue. In recent years, a user of a genealogy database uploaded a DNA sample that flagged them up as a distant cousin of Cooper. Detectives working on cold cases are building a family tree in the hope of identifying the unknown killer; despite Cooper's potential Romanian accent, this family tree connection is in the USA. DNA testing, however, has revealed that the killer may be of European descent. Meanwhile, amateur sleuths have continued to find cases as recently as 2008 that bear chilling similarities to Kite's murder.

Though the work will be painstaking, it is hoped the family tree being built by investigators may unlock the truth behind the death of Kite. It may be that the drop of blood left on the steps at Kite's house, alongside the unknown blood in the shower, will prove to be the key to his murder. If so, it will be a remarkable twist of fate and one that may yet see the killer of Kite, a man who was well-liked and sadly missed, brought to justice at last.



**LEFT** One theory of Kite's murder is that it was something to do with his work in Colorado

**ABOVE** Though eyewitness descriptions have been confusing, detectives released this sketch of 'Cooper'



My Town.  
My Health

CIRCLEVILLE





# THE CURIOUS CASE OF THE CIRCLEVILLE LETTERS

WHEN A SPATE OF POISON PEN LETTERS SPIRALLED INTO  
A NEST OF BLACKMAIL AND LOADED GUNS, A SLEEPY  
TOWN WAS PLUNGED INTO FEAR AND SUSPICION

WORDS CATHERINE CURZON

**LEFT** Circleville, Ohio, was just a normal American small town, until one resident took up their poison pen

**BELOW** At the heart of the drama was an accusation of infidelity, and threats of violence

**N**estled on the banks of Ohio's Scioto River, outside of Columbus, Circleville is the epitome of picket fence America. With just over 14,000 inhabitants, it's the sort of small town that people dream of retiring to, a place of neighbourhood get-togethers and friendly faces. Yet in the late 1970s, a visit from the mailman changed all that forever, transforming Circleville into the location of a still-unsolved mystery that fascinates enthusiasts of true crime to this day.





## MARY GILLISPIE

Over a short period in 1976, letters poured into the mailboxes of Circleville's residents that chilled them. The largely handwritten letters contained detailed personal information about each of the recipients and accused them of various wrongdoings. Though the author had cast the net wide, their attention seemed to focus particularly on school bus driver Mary Gillispie, who was accused of having an affair with the superintendent of schools, Gordon Massie. The fact that Mary claimed to be innocent of the charge against her didn't seem to interest the writer, who gleefully told Mary that they had been watching her house and children. Things went from bad to worse when her husband, Ron, received a letter that told him his wife was cheating on him. Unless he put a stop to her

**“FURIOUS, RON STORMED OUT OF THE HOUSE WITH HIS GUN, DETERMINED TO HUNT DOWN HIS TORMENTOR. MINUTES LATER, HIS PICK-UP COLLIDED WITH A TREE, KILLING HIM”**

and Massie's romance by any means possible, warned the author, his life would be at stake. When a second letter arrived a fortnight later threatening to broadcast Mary's alleged affair in the media and post signs around town, they knew they had to do something.

Mary and Ron were horrified. Though the envelopes were postmarked Columbus, there were no clues as to who wrote them, let alone a return address. The couple confided in just three people about the affair: Ron's sister, Karen Sue, her husband, Paul Freshour, and Paul's sister. The Gillispies had a suspicion that Paul might be the man behind the letters and set out to prove it, copying the distinctive capital letters used by the Circleville writer, they wrote some anonymous poison pen notes of their own and sent them to Paul. In them, they told Paul that they knew what he was up to and demanded that he stop.

Perhaps it was just a coincidence, but the plot seemed to work. The letters targeting Mary and Ron Gillispie fell silent.

## A FATAL CALL

Everything changed on 19 August 1977, when Ron received an anonymous phone call from the person who claimed to have written the letters. Furious, Ron stormed out of the house with his gun, determined to hunt down his tormentor. Minutes later, Ron's pick-up truck collided with a tree, killing him.

No gunshot had been reported before the crash, but when investigators examined Ron's pistol, they discovered that a single bullet had been fired. They were unable to find out when, where or why. An autopsy confirmed that Ron had been well over the drink drive limit and that seemed to explain the crash, but Mary wasn't convinced.

STAY AWAY FROM MASSIE:  
DONT LIE WHEN QUESTIONED ABOUT KNOWING  
HIM. I KNOW WHERE YOU LIVE. I'VE BEEN OBSER-  
VING YOUR HOUSE AND KNOW YOU HAVE CHILD-  
REN. THIS IS NO JOKE. PLEASE TAKE IT SERIOUS.  
EVERYONE CONCERNED HAS BEEN NOTIFIED  
AND EVERYTHING WILL BE OVER SOON:

**ABOVE** The Circleville letters were full of rumour and threat; nobody could've guessed they'd end in death

**RIGHT** With blackmail, threats of violence and dark secrets coming thick and fast, residents began to look at their neighbours with suspicion





© Pickaway County Sheriff's Office

She was adamant that the letter writer had carried out their threats of violent retribution.

Though the crash was put down to a tragic accident due to the amount of alcohol in Ron's blood, those who knew him claimed that couldn't be the case: Ron was virtually teetotal. As gossip swept through the town, a fresh spate of letters began in the wake of the crash. This time, the writer accused Sheriff Dwight Radcliff of a cover-up. Paul, Ron's brother-in-law, had his own suspicions and believed that Ron had managed to confront the writer before his death. Though Sheriff Radcliff did speak to at least one suspect, when nothing came of it the case was closed. Intriguingly, this seemed to antagonise the writer still further; letters arrived in residents' mailboxes in which the anonymous author told them that there must be an inquiry, as the Sheriff was lying to them.

Pushed to her limits, Mary now admitted that she and Massie had indeed been having an affair, though she swore that it had only started after the letters began arriving. With their currency of threats and dark secrets, the notes had shaken the sleepy Circleville community to its roots. Written in stark block capitals and bearing the Columbus postmark, the letters were dotted with illustrations and were illustrated with lewd doodles. Nobody was above suspicion and every smiling face could be masking the perpetrator: Circleville was reeling.

## THE GUN TRAP

Six years after the death of her husband, Mary Gillispie had moved on with her life and was still driving the school bus, hoping against hope that the years of silence meant that her terrifying experience was finally over. That peaceful existence came to an end in February 1983, when the letter writer returned. This time, they took things up a gear, hanging signs along Gillispie's route accusing her of all manner of wrongdoings. Furious, she tore one sign down and found that it was attached to a length of twine, which snaked along to a box.

Gillispie took the box home. When she opened it, she was shocked to find that it contained a gun, rigged as a booby trap and intended to discharge when she pulled the sign down. Luckily for her the device failed to operate, or she might have been killed.

The gun cracked the case wide open. While an effort had been made to file off the serial number, enough remained for Sheriff Radcliffe to trace its owner. What he discovered shook Gillispie to the core.

## ON TRIAL

The gun that was intended to kill Gillispie was found to belong to her brother-in-law, Paul Freshour. The

**ABOVE:** Ron Gillispie died on his way to confront the letter writer, but why did he apparently fire his gun in the moments before his death?

**ABOVE, LEFT** Before the Circleville letters began to arrive, the sleepy Ohio town was most famous for its annual pumpkin festival





claimed the gun had been stolen long before it was left for Gillispie, he was taken in for questioning. While he was detained, Freshour was asked to take a handwriting test and copied out some of the anonymous letters for police. When a polygraph test seemed to show that Freshour wasn't telling the truth about the theft of his gun, it was more than enough to convince the Sheriff that he had arrested the right man. Freshour was charged with attempted murder.

Freshour's trial opened on 24 October 1983 and though he wasn't charged with writing the letters, they were used as evidence against him, supported by the testimony of two expert witnesses who testified that Freshour was the man wielding the poison pen. In her testimony, Gillispie admitted that she and Freshour's now estranged wife, Karen Sue, had discussed the possibility that he might be the writer. Karen Sue told police that she had found letters hidden in the home she shared with her husband and when his boss confirmed he was absent from work on the day that the booby trap was planted, the case for the prosecution seemed stronger than ever.

Though Freshour didn't speak in his defence, his lawyer pointed out that Karen Sue was hardly an impartial witness. She stood to gain if her husband went to prison and would certainly get the divorce settlement she hoped. In addition, she had raised her suspicions about her husband to Gillispie and the police only after their marriage broke down. It wasn't an amicable split either, but one filled with anger and animosity: Karen Sue certainly had motive to make her husband's life miserable.

Despite Karen Sue's personal interest in securing Freshour's conviction and the fact that he had an alibi for much of the day on which the gun was rigged, including the likely time when the sign and booby trap were placed, Freshour was convicted of attempted murder. He was sentenced to a maximum of 25 years, with a recommendation that he serve a minimum term of seven years. While in prison he continued to protest his innocence and even received letters from the Circleville writer himself, as did residents

in town. Frustrated by the fact that he was seemingly smuggling the notes out of the prison, authorities placed him in solitary confinement; it did nothing to stem the tide, leaving prison wardens convinced that Freshour couldn't have been the writer. The envelopes were all postmarked as coming from Columbus, but Freshour was in prison in Lima and simply would not have had the opportunity to be able to smuggle poison pen letters past authorities.

Freshour became eligible for parole in 1990. He remained in prison for four more years, because the letters were still being sent and he wouldn't admit to somehow being behind them. Since his release in May 1994, Freshour has continued to protest his innocence.

## UNSOLVED MYSTERIES

The case continued to fascinate enthusiasts and found a new audience after it was featured on *Unsolved Mysteries* in 1994. Not long after the episode had been broadcast, the production crew received a threat of their own that appeared to come from the Circleville writer. The postcard read, "Forget Circleville Ohio: Do Nothing to Hurt Sheriff Radcliff: If You Come to Ohio You El Sickos Will Pay: The Circleville Writer".

Freshour died in 2012; he maintained his innocence to the end. Little did he know that, just a few years later, new evidence would be uncovered that might prove he had been telling the truth all along.

## NEW SUSPECTS

Though the authorities believed that the case had been solved and the perpetrator punished, for some people Freshour was nothing more than a scapegoat. In a town



**ABOVE** Circleville looked like the perfect place to raise a family; instead, it exploded into a hotbed of rumour, tragedy and fear

**BELOW** With the whole town living on its nerves, a school bus ride nearly ended in tragedy







© Pickaway County Sheriff's Office

## 44 YANT'S INVESTIGATIONS SEEMED TO SUGGEST THAT THERE WERE NO LESS THAN THREE LETTER WRITERS 47

that had been torn apart, where neighbours now looked upon each other with suspicion and distrust, Freshour claimed that he had been hung out to try simply because Circleville was so desperate to close this dark chapter in its history. His case fascinated journalist Martin Yant, who carried out investigations of his own and learned that a bus driver on Gillispie's route had seen a man standing beside a yellow El Camino at the site of the booby trap just minutes before she passed through. Freshour had an alibi at that precise time and the eyewitness description did not match Freshour, nor did he own an El Camino.

Yant's investigations seemed to suggest that there were no less than three letter writers; none of whom were Freshour. The first suspect was the son of Massie, the man whom Gillispie had initially denied having an affair with. The second suspect Yant identified was a co-worker who had fallen for Gillispie and was motivated by jealousy. The third suspect is none other than Ron Gillespie's own sister, the woman who was married to Freshour. The description of the man seen standing by the El Camino matched the man she was seeing after she and Freshour split; perhaps most damningly, Karen Sue's brother just happened to own a yellow El Camino.

All of this, of course, is circumstantial. The events investigated by Yant took place decades ago and eyewitness accounts will certainly be less reliable 30 years after the event. The police certainly believe that there is nothing of

value in these new theories and have categorically stated that they got their man. This conclusion was supported by forensic handwriting specialist Beverley East, who examined the letters for an episode of *48 Hours* that was broadcast in 2021. According to East, Freshour wrote the Circleville letters.

FBI profiler Mary Ellen O'Toole, who was also asked to join *48 Hours'* investigation, disagrees with this assessment. According to O'Toole, the sort of person who would write such letters was driven by a need to exert control and cause terror. That person is not, O'Toole says, the sort of risk taker who would set up a booby trap beside a public road in broad daylight. In her estimation, there were at least two people involved in the ongoing torment of Circleville.

If East and the police are correct, then one mystery has been solved even as another has been created. The letters continued to pour in after Freshour's incarceration, all posted from Columbus. Prison officials confirmed that there was no way Freshour could possibly have achieved this from his prison cell, meaning that it was a feat that could only have been achieved by an accomplice. That person, if they existed at all, left no clues to their identity.

To some, the Circleville letters remain an intriguing mystery and a flagrant miscarriage of justice, in which an innocent man languished in prison for a decade for a crime he didn't commit. To others, it was an open and shut case and the only mystery is how Freshour managed to continue his campaign of anonymous harassment from inside a prison cell. In either case, there are plenty of unanswered questions that journalists and hobbyists are still seeking answers to. Whatever the truth, the Circleville writer certainly achieved one thing: they will forever be one of the most celebrated cases in the history of weird crime.

**ABOVE** A booby-trapped gun might have ended tragically for bus driver Mary Gillispie.

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# THE DALI MURDERS

THE LEGENDARY ARTIST SALVADOR DALI FOUND INSPIRATION IN FRANCE; YEARS LATER, POLICE  
FEARED A SERIAL KILLER HAD TAKEN THEIR OWN INSPIRATION FROM DALI'S SURREAL WORKS

WORDS CATHERINE CURZON







**O**n 19 September 1963, Salvador Dalí walked into the train station at Perpignan, a sleepy Catalan city in the south of France. It was a journey he had made often and a location he knew well as the place from which he would send his luggage on to Paris as he drove up from his home in Spain. This occasion, however, was different, because this time, as Dalí waited to load his bags onto the train, he experienced a moment of divine inspiration. Recalling the experience later, he wrote, "I had a precise vision of the constitution of the universe".

### LE MYSTIQUE DE LA GARE

Perpignan became the centre of the universe in that moment and the inspiration behind his monumental work, *La Gare de Perpignan*. Two years after inspiration struck, he completed the painting; today, it hangs in the Museum Ludwig in Cologne. Though certainly the grandest of his works that feature Perpignan, it was not the only one; in fact, the station appears in several of his pieces. In recognition of their famous visitor's statement, the authorities renamed the square outside the station Place Salvador Dalí, and visitors today are greeted by a statue of Dalí outside, its arms outstretched as though to embrace the station itself.

**LEFT** Dalí's work, *The Spectre of Sex Appeal*, features a headless, handless female body. Police feared such imagery may have inspired a murderer.

**BELOW** The station at Perpignan inspired Salvador Dalí to declare it the centre of the universe, but it has a more sinister reputation, too.



© Alamy





Yet not everyone who heard of Dali's divine inspiration was moved to turn it into art. For one unknown killer, it became a call to violence.

### MARIE-HÉLÈNE GONZALEZ

Thirty years after Dali embraced his cosmic vision, Perpignan entered the headlines for a far less pleasant reason. Over six years, four young women went missing in the city; two of them were found dead, their bodies horrifically mutilated. The third boarded a train and vanished into thin air.

Marie-Hélène Gonzalez, an assistant in a butcher's shop a few miles from Perpignan, was 22 years old when she arrived in Perpignan on the evening of 16 June 1998. She was planning to walk along the Rue Courteline beside the station and hitch a lift to her parents' home a few miles out of town. Gonzalez told her family to expect her by 10.00pm. She never arrived. Instead, her mutilated body was discovered on wasteland that ran alongside the motorway to Barcelona in June 1998. She had been dead for over a week. Gonzalez's genitals had been cut out and her head and hands cut off; they were later found in a rubbish bag six months later. At her side was a cardboard box, which contained a selection of her internal organs.

### MOKHTARIA CHAÏB

For detectives in Perpignan, the crime carried a horrible sense of familiarity; this was something they had seen at least twice before. At 11pm on 21 December 1997, 19-year-old Mokhtaria Chaïb left her boyfriend's apartment just around the corner from the station and turned into the Rue Courteline to begin the walk home to her rooms at the Cité Universitaire. She planned to follow the same route down

which Gonzalez had walked; sadly, that was not the only thing the girls had in common.

The following morning, Chaïb's remains were found by a dog walker. She too had been mutilated with almost medical precision; she had been killed by three stab wounds to her heart and her arms were folded across her chest. Police pulled in a transient, petty criminal named Andres Palomino-Barrios for the murder of Chaïb. Palomino-Barrios was a doctor who had become a trainee butcher as he had been banned from medicine because of his strange behaviour and love of crime. Yet he was being held in custody when Gonzalez was murdered, meaning that he could not be responsible for her death. With no evidence to tie him to the killing of Chaïb either, the police had no choice but to release him.

### TATIANA ANDUJAR

The murder of Chaïb had led detectives to suspect that there might be a budding serial killer at large in Perpignan. Two years before Chaïb's murder, on 24 September 1995, student Tatiana Andujar called her parents from Perpignan Station to ask if they could give her a ride home. When her father replied that he wouldn't be able to make it, Andujar decided that she would hitch a ride. She turned into the Rue Courteline and then simply disappeared. No trace of her has ever been found.

**“AT HER SIDE WAS A CARDBOARD BOX, WHICH CONTAINED A SELECTION OF HER INTERNAL ORGANS”**

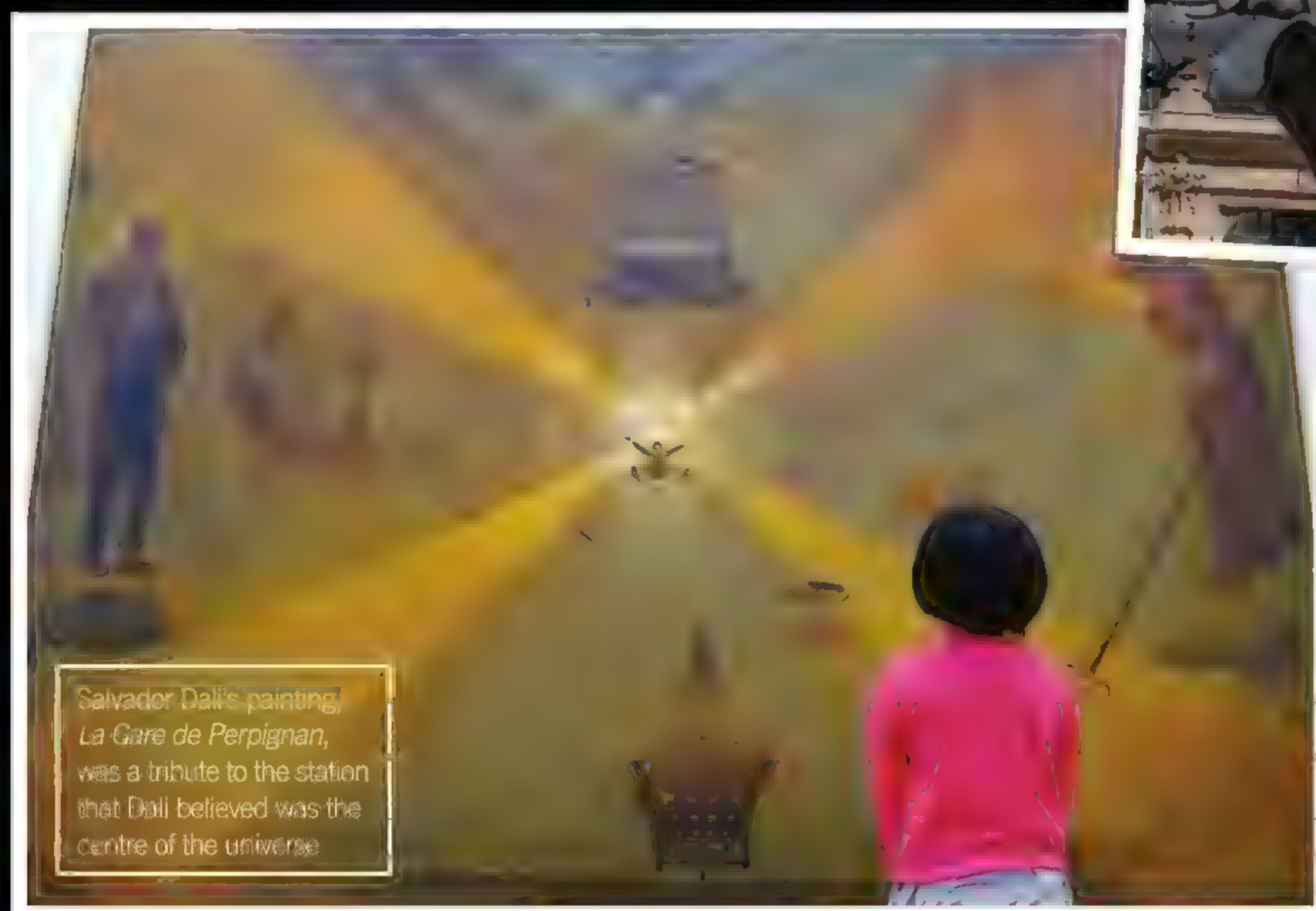
**ABOVE** Lawyer Etienne Nicolau (right) accompanied the victims' relatives to the 2018 trial of Jacques Rançon; Rançon received a life sentence

**INSET** Lawyer Etienne Nicolau (centre), Conception Gonzalez (right) and Marie-José Garcia (left), mothers of the victims, address journalists at the trial of Jacques Rançon





**LEFT** Today, Dali's fascination with Perpignan is memorialised by the monumental statue of the artist that sits outside the station, arms outstretched in joy.



Salvador Dali's painting, *La Gare de Perpignan*, was a tribute to the station that Dali believed was the centre of the universe.

## SALVADOR DALI

Born in 1904 in Spain, Salvador Dali became renowned for his surrealist works across a variety of media including painting, sculpture, film and writing. Distinguished by his technical skill and the bizarre and sometimes disturbing imagery in his art, he proved to be enormously influential both during his lifetime and following his death in 1989.

**BELOW** Famed for his surrealist works, Dali had a fascination with sadomasochism.



### FATIMA IDRABOU

The final victim found in Perpignan was 23-year-old Fatima Idrahrou. She was discovered dead on 19 February 2001; this time, however, her body had not been mutilated and an eyewitness had seen a car leaving the scene; police had not only a description of the vehicle, but part of its number plate.

### DALI AS INSPIRATION

With precious few leads until the eyewitness to Idrahrou's abduction, investigators began examining whether there might be a link to Perpignan's most famous patron. Female body parts feature in many of his works, often in isolation as though removed; limbless or headless bodies were depicted across his canvasses and for police, some of the imagery in Dali's paintings was simply too close to the positioning and mutilations seen on the bodies of the women.

Dali had openly discussed his fascination with sadomasochism and his apparent occasional preoccupation with female anatomy led police to seriously pursue a line of enquiry that addressed the possibility of the murders being the work of a serial killer with a Dali fetish. It didn't escape their attention that his works had featured women without heads or hands, nor that female sexual organs and breasts had been featured on Dali's canvasses. If his art had truly inspired a maniac who could operate on his victims with surgical precision, then this might only be the start.

Understandably desperate to find a lead, police in Perpignan commissioned art experts to produce reports on Dali's paintings, the hope being that they would find some significant clue in them that might turn the tide. Hundreds of people were questioned and all were released; it began to seem as though the murderer might never be found. In fact, that wasn't the case.

### THE KILLERS

For Idrahrou's family, justice was served in 2004 when a man named Marc Delpech admitted to her murder, claiming that she had resisted his sexual advances. He was sentenced to 30 years in prison, but had no connection to the murders of the other women, nor the disappearance of Andujar.

A further decade would pass before DNA tests in October 2014 confirmed that Chaïb's assailant was a 54-year-old named Jacques Rançon, who had a long history of violent and sexual assaults. Though he confessed to the rape and murder of both Chaïb and Gonzalez and received a life sentence, he was incarcerated when Andujar disappeared and could not, therefore, be a suspect in her case. Sadly, for the family of Andujar, the wait for justice continues.

Despite the strange similarities in the killings, ultimately they were the work not of one serial killer, but of at least two unconnected murderers. While the deaths seemed to suggest that the imagery of Salvador Dali had somehow provided a template for the killings, this turned out to be nothing but a coincidence: Perpignan may well have been the centre of his own universe, but the work of Salvador Dali had no part to play in the murders of four innocent women.



# CANNIBAL TROUBLE IN PARADISE

WHAT EXACTLY HAPPENED TO MICHAEL ROCKEFELLER? DID HE SIMPLY DROWN, OR WAS HIS DISAPPEARANCE THE RESULT OF SOMETHING MORE SINISTER?

**A**s far as last words go, Michael Rockefeller's are still fairly jarring. He was last seen in 1961 by Dutch anthropologist René Wassing, climbing down from an upturned 40-foot long canoe and sliding into the Arafura Sea about ten miles off the shores of New Guinea. The pair had been stranded on the canoe after their double pontoon boat had overturned, and their local guides had swum back to dry land to look for help. Two days later, the guides still hadn't returned, and the canoe had drifted even further out into the ocean. Finally, Rockefeller resolved to leave Wassing and attempt to swim back to shore. "I think I can make it," he said. The next day, Wassing was rescued by a search party, but young Michael Rockefeller was never seen again.

## THE JOURNEY BEGINS

Rockefeller's disappearance quickly became an extremely high-profile missing persons case, simply because he was a member of one of the most powerful families in the United States at the time. He was the fifth child of the then-New York Governor, and later Vice President, Nelson Rockefeller, and his wife Mary Todhunter Rockefeller. Having made their fortune in the oil business, the prominent family were extremely wealthy, and the children had very privileged upbringings. After graduating cum laude from Harvard University in 1960 with a BA in History and Economics, Michael Rockefeller began to crave adventure. He wasted no time, and embarked on his first expedition to western Netherlands New Guinea (now Indonesia) to study the Dani tribe. The expedition in question was for Harvard's Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology. Anthropologist and filmmaker Robert Gardner and his film crew accompanied Rockefeller on his trip, and the group shot footage for







an ethnographic documentary called *Dead Birds*, with Rockefeller working as the sound recordist.

Almost as soon as he returned home to the States, Rockefeller grew eager to get back out to the Netherlands New Guinea and continue exploring. "It's the desire to do something adventurous," he explained, "at a time when frontiers, in the real sense of the world, are disappearing." He went back shortly afterwards, aged 23, this time to study the Asmat tribe of the southwest coast. Dutch anthropologist René Wassing joined him, and the pair set out to immerse themselves in the tribe's culture.

In a letter home, Rockefeller wrote: "I am having a thoroughly exhausting but most exciting time here... The Asmat is like a huge puzzle with the variations in ceremony and art style forming the pieces. My trips are enabling me to comprehend (if only in a superficial, rudimentary manner) that nature of this puzzle..."

The people of the Asmat tribe have developed one of the most well-known woodcarving traditions in the Pacific, and their art is highly sought after by anthropologists and collectors worldwide. Aside from Rockefeller's need for exploration, the main aim of his and Wassing's expedition was to collect genuine Asmat art to take home and put on show in a museum exhibition. Unlike Rockefeller, the







Michael was the fifth son of New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller and Mary Todhunter Rockefeller

**“HE HAD BEEN MAROONED FOR SEVERAL DAYS WITH LITTLE FOOD OR DRINKING WATER”**

woodcarvings made it back to the Big Apple. They are currently on display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City and the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam. Rockefeller, meanwhile, remains missing.

#### **SPECULATIVE THINKING**

There are many possibilities that have been explored regarding Rockefeller's disappearance, and each new theory is as likely – or unlikely – as the last. Some believe he drowned while swimming to shore, while others believe he was killed and eaten by the Asmat tribe he was studying. After being missing for three years, Rockefeller was finally declared legally dead in 1964. But with no body, who is to say he was even killed? Could he have been inducted into the Asmat tribe way back when he first went missing? Could he have been living among them for the last 50 years?

Perhaps the most logical explanation for Rockefeller's disappearance is that he drowned. That was the conclusion that the Dutch government came to when they declared

him dead after calling off the unsuccessful search, but they also found no evidence that could have led them to make that assumption. Nevertheless, Wassing and Rockefeller's canoe was an estimated ten to 12 miles from the closest shore when the latter started to swim back for help, and it seems very unlikely that someone would be able to make it that far across open waters without a lot of prior training. It was the middle of November in the Arafura Sea. It would have been extremely hot and Rockefeller would have quickly become exhausted and succumbed to the ocean. He had been marooned on a canoe for several days beforehand, presumably with little, if any, food or clean drinking water, so he would have had little strength left for an exhausting swim. The chances that he made it to shore are very slim. And then there were the things in the sea that may have got to him before the elements did. The sharks in the waters surrounding the coast weren't known to be man-eaters, but the saltwater crocodiles certainly were.

The most popular – and most unusual – theory is that Rockefeller was murdered and eaten by cannibals. There's no delicate way to put it. As well as being skilled craftspeople, the Asmat tribes were documented headhunters and cannibals. Unlike the Dani people, Asmat culture is steeped in reciprocal murder and barbarism. In the 20th century, seeking revenge against their enemies was an important element of Asmat culture, and they were known to preserve the heads of other tribes before halving the skulls and eating the brains along with sago worms. They didn't believe in natural deaths; every death was a result of either murder or sacrifice, and their profound sense of balance meant the murder of an Asmat tribe member had to be avenged. Rockefeller's death is believed by some to have been revenge for an attack on Otsjanep village by the Dutch patrol in 1958, three years earlier.

#### **THE SEARCH FOR ROCKEFELLER**

The cannibal theory first started as a rumour in 1964, not long after Rockefeller had been declared dead. It seems like a ridiculous and outlandish theory to many, but it inspired journalist and author Milt Machlin to set off on an expedition headed for Netherlands New Guinea in 1968, with the sole goal of investigating Rockefeller's disappearance. In his best-selling book, *The Search For Michael Rockefeller*, Machlin explores the possibility of his subject still being alive, but held against his will by the Asmat people and with no way of escaping. This new theory wasn't completely out of the blue; the book actually contains eyewitness accounts from people who believed they had seen Rockefeller on an island just off New Guinea after he had gone missing, though these have not been officially confirmed. According to Machlin, his interest was piqued after being approached by a somewhat shady Australian man named Donahue, who said: "Suppose I told you that I saw Michael Rockefeller alive only ten weeks ago?" The man then excitedly explained how he had spotted Rockefeller in the Trobriand Islands, hundreds of miles from where he had disappeared.

It wasn't just Donahue who claimed to have seen Rockefeller in one piece. Dutch missionary priest Father Jan Smit, who had known Rockefeller from his time in New Guinea, believed he once saw an Asmat man wearing a pair





Some believe Rockefeller could have been inducted into an Asmat tribe



Anthropologist René Wassing photographed a month after Rockefeller went missing

of shorts that belonged to Rockefeller. He fully believed that the American had survived the swim back to dry land from the canoe, only to be captured by the Asmat tribe, and then scalped, murdered and eaten. Unfortunately, Father Smit didn't get to see much more evidence regarding his friend's disappearance; he was shot and killed in 1965.

Since Rockefeller's supposed death, other self-proclaimed eye witnesses have sworn that they have seen him wandering around remote Asmat villages alive and well over the last few decades. However, just like the drowning theory and the cannibal theory, there is still no evidence whatsoever to back up these sightings.

## “LOCAL RESIDENTS WADED THROUGH SWAMPS LOOKING FOR A BODY”

### LOSING HOPE

When Rockefeller's travelling companion René Wassing was finally rescued by a vessel sent from Merauke, he and the unturned canoe were found 22 miles from the New Guinea coast. Though it had only been a day since the two men parted, Rockefeller was nowhere to be seen. Dutch governor Pieter Platteel provided boats, planes, marines and police units to look for him. The search party grew and grew until crowds of local residents were wading through the swamps and mangrove trees, looking for signs of a body.

President John F Kennedy eventually heard of Rockefeller's disappearance and sent a telegram expressing his concern over the matter, as well as aircraft and a cargo ship from the US Seventh Fleet. Nelson Rockefeller and Michael's twin sister Mary, accompanied by a group of scandal-hungry journalists, left New York for Merauka as soon as they received word of what was happening. The search continued for several weeks until the Dutch and US governments were forced to give up looking for him and conclude that Michael Rockefeller must have drowned. Even the Rockefeller family's immense wealth and power were unable to reveal any more information than this, and Michael was never seen again.

## THE LEGACY OF MICHAEL ROCKEFELLER

More than 50 years after Michael Rockefeller's disappearance, the world is still desperate to know what happened to him. Did he drown? Or was he murdered by a New Guinea tribe and eaten as revenge for an unrelated attack on the Asmat people a few years before? Whatever happened, his story certainly made a lasting impression: songs, novels and short stories have all been written about him. Jeff Cohen wrote a play, *The Man Who Ate Michael Rockefeller*, based on the short story by Christopher Stokes, and the film *Welcome to The Jungle* centres around couples that go looking for him and meet their own grisly demises. The mystery of Rockefeller and the Asmat tribe rocked the world in the Sixties and ever now, his legacy continues to inspire the media.

Rockefeller's memory has been honoured by the academics too. Harvard University, which counts Rockefeller among its alumni, has been offering Michael F. Rockefeller Memorial Fellowships every year since 1968. The fellowship is presented to a handful of promising and inquisitive Harvard students, offering them both the funding and the opportunity to venture out on an expedition just as Rockefeller did, and immerse themselves in a culture different to their own. In addition to that, a tribute to Rockefeller and his last expedition is currently on display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. Nelson Rockefeller donated many of the Asmat artefacts his son collected, including war shields, bird poles, body masks and wooden sculptures, to the museum to make up the Michael F. Rockefeller Wing collection.



# Killer Kinks

**116**

## JAPAN'S CELEBRITY CANNIBAL

AFTER KILLING AND CONSUMING HIS CRUSH, ISSEI SAGAWA WALKS FREE, CAPITALISING ON HIS CRIME

**124**

## 50 SHADES OF GREY GONE WRONG

A BEAUTY QUEEN GONE BAD, DRIVEN MAD BY HER LUST FOR A MAN SHE COULDN'T HAVE

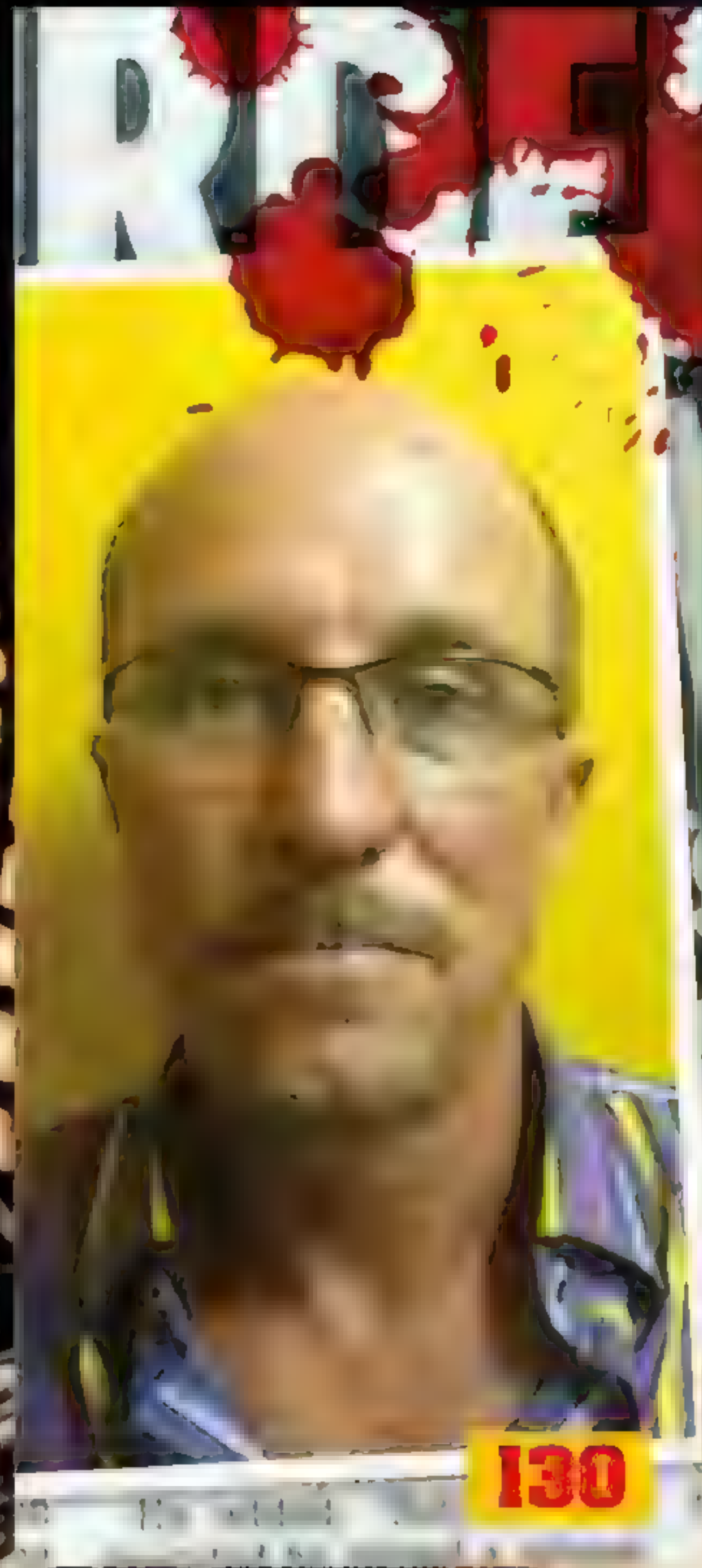
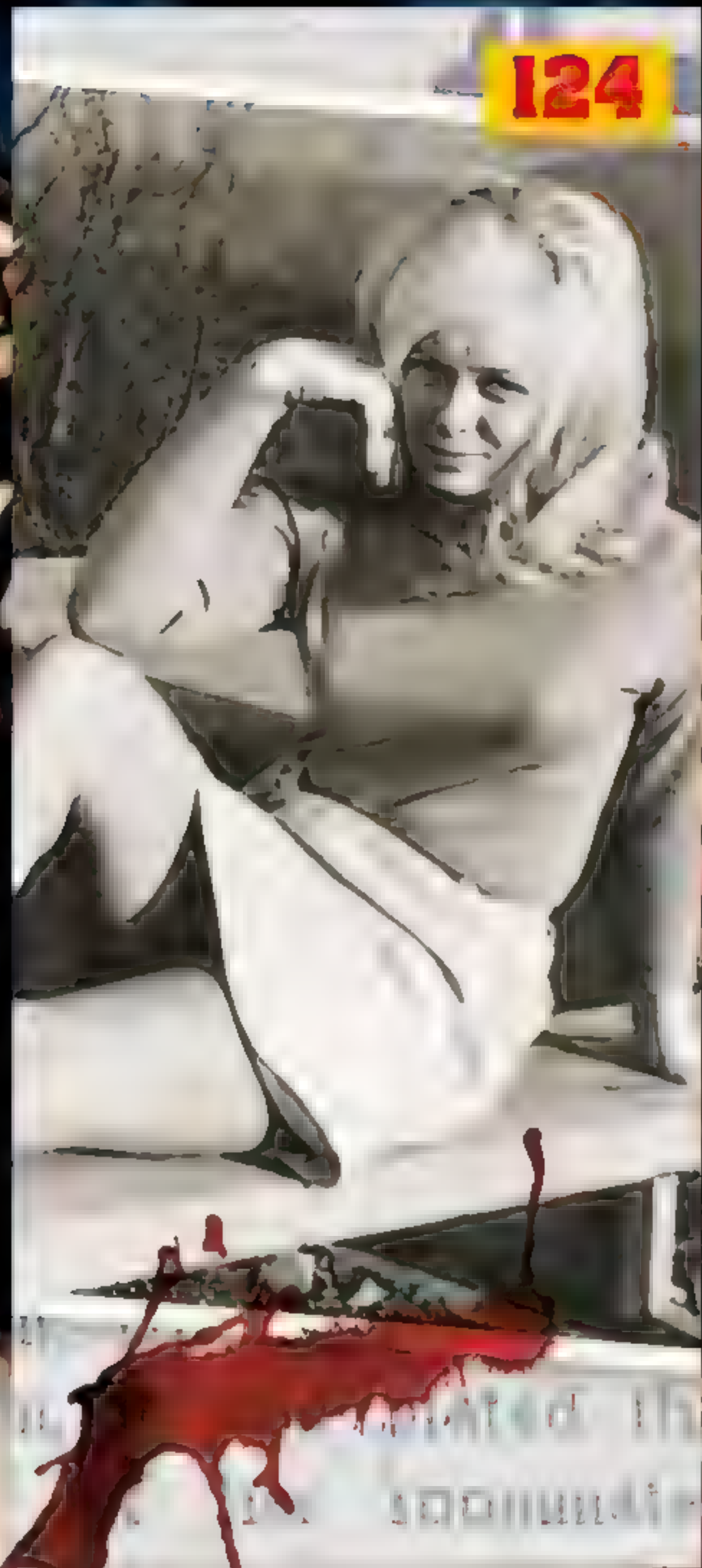
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## SPIT! DON'T SWALLOW...

THESE DENTAL PATIENTS GOT A WHOLE LOAD MORE THAN THEY BARGAINED FOR









# JAPAN'S CELEBRITY CANNIBAL

IN THE SUMMER OF 1981, A NEAT-LOOKING STUDENT RESIDING IN THE ROMANTIC STREETS OF PARIS GAZED AT HIS PARAMOUR, RENÉE, SAVOURING THE MOMENT. HE THEN LOWERED HIS LIPS AND ATE HER

WORDS DR K. CHARLIE OUGHTON

I ssei Sagawa is one of those peculiar breeds of killers who became famous for committing a crime against only one person. Prior to eating Renée Hartevelt – a Dutch student on whom he had a crush – he had murdered her and raped her corpse. He was arrested four days after disposing of the bits of her body that he did not want to keep. He had also been convicted of the attempted rape of a previous would-be victim and was a petty thief, but it is the story of this strange man's life and his relationship with the press that provides particular food for thought.

## STARTERS IN LIFE

Sagawa was never a normal child. Despite coming from a loving family with wealthy parents who doted on him, he was born prematurely and had always been small and weak in comparison to other children. He also considered himself ugly. It would be wrong, however, to think that his physical deficiency would impact on the troubling scope of his mind.

He was in first grade when he first experienced sexual fantasies. He became fascinated by a handsome schoolboy friend's thigh, but it was girls who truly took his imagination. A single, stolen glimpse of the soft, white leg of a young schoolgirl when her skirt rucked up was all it took. Sagawa

said, "It made me want to taste her flesh," and from this point onwards, he became obsessed with the idea of cannibalism. He thought that if he could consume the flesh of someone beautiful and healthy, he would gain those qualities himself.

Indeed, Sagawa's entire sexuality was disordered from the start. He was outright terrified that there was something physically wrong with him when he experienced his first erection because he did not know what was happening to his body. His confusion was, arguably, partly a result of his perverted mind's interaction with his Japanese culture. While Japan developed the sexually exploratory art now associated with manga's famous 'tentacle porn' (through the Shunga style dating back to the 17th century), the Western view of sex as shameful had penetrated the country in the post-war era. This led to some Japanese depictions and discussions of sex becoming euphemised. Orgasms were shown in art and popular culture through bodily functions such as nosebleeds – anything that signalled release. As a result, sex was a taboo concept in Japan at Sagawa's time and he had no recollection of even hearing his parents say the word.

SAGAWA sits at home. He's surrounded by images of the girls who fill his dreams but, judging by the size of it, not his bed. He cuddles his teddy bear. No one else may ever hold truly him – and it's his all own fault









**ABOVE** Always the outsider lost in his own thoughts, the figure of the murderer is dwarfed by the other patients at the psychiatric hospital where he was held. They seem more puzzled by him than he is by the world

**ABOVE RIGHT** Apprehended and with his hair typically askew, the unrepentant cannibal stares at the photographer, head on. The laughter of the man behind him may have been an indication of the divided public reaction to come

Nevertheless, while his tongue lacked the language to describe his thoughts, his desires throbbed. He had no clue how to pleasure himself, or indeed any idea what masturbation actually was. So he did what no other normal boy would do – he flirted with his family dog. He petted the panting mutt until it licked his dictatorially placed organ until Sagawa reached ecstasy and his own limpness returned.

Sagawa's first brush with the law came when he was still in Japan. He'd been spying on a beautiful blonde lady and snuck into her apartment with the intention of bonking her on the head and eating her unconscious body. However, his potential prize woke up and screamed. Sagawa was arrested and duly charged with attempted rape. In retrospect, he stated that he was surprised that doctors did not connect his crime to cannibalism. We may wonder if, perhaps, it was because he hadn't taken his cutlery with him.

### POETIC DEATH

At the age of 28, Sagawa sought to study comparative literature – it's the language of love, after all. Sagawa left for the Sorbonne in France. Photographs show him standing in front of key landmarks, a seemingly normal student-tourist sampling the sights. In documentaries, he has interwoven these hazy holiday snaps of yesteryear and world-famous places with casual details of the crimes he would go on to commit in their shadow. He was a hop and a skip away from other sightseers nibbling cream pies and frites in the sun.

That was until a non-French fancy caught his eye. Her name was Renée and he thought she was gorgeous, as well as unusually kind. He would secretly sketch her, and then he concocted a chance to meet her. She was asked to attend his

apartment on the pretence of recording some poetry to help with a project for one of his professors. His apartment was dressed with a fluffy toy rabbit and tasteful drapes, enough to help make anyone feel at home. Sure enough, she perched next to an oak-textured desk and began to recite the menu of phrases he had selected for her. He has stated that he went to some effort in his choice, for it had to be right, and he stood behind her for a second, drinking her in.

He then flicked the finger that tripped his trigger and flambéed the bullet that shot through her brain. She was killed instantly. He fainted.

### TASTEFUL TOURISM

To gain the fullest enjoyment of being a student in a foreign climate, it is wise to immerse yourself fully in new surroundings to experience the local culture. In the same spirit of exchange, it can also be a time to show the host culture (and other fellow travellers) the customs of your own home soil. Sagawa followed this guidance while remaining somewhat bizarrely courteous to his deceased fantasy courtesan. He placed her head gently on a comfortable towel, relieved her of her clothes, then bent down and buried his face in her rump, which was obviously uncooked. Well, he tried to – the foreign tourist may often find that anticipated actions are not quite as expected and Sagawa found the flesh too tough for his teeth. It hurt his jaw. As he later told *Vice* magazine, "No matter how deep I cut, all I saw was the fat beneath the skin. It looked like corn, and it took a while to actually reach the red meat".

The naive, childlike sketches he drew of the incident afterwards show a shocked Sagawa with comically





Renée Hartvelt as a young girl. She would grow up to be a gentle, considerate, stunning woman before her very goodness led to her death at the hands of a man who possessed none of her qualities

exaggerated teeth finding he hadn't managed to bite off what he thought he could chew.

He then cut the body up using a knife and a saw. The parts that best partnered his taste palette were placed on plates and put in the fridge. Sagawa was concerned that the carcass would start to smell in the high June heat, but was not keen on cleaning up after he had eaten: mess was not his speciality.

On the successful completion of his university course, Sagawa took a cruise to consider his next move. While out sailing the ocean blue, he met a man and his spouse on their meal for two and from this man, a butcher, he learned how to dissect a body. (Sagawa later wrote the butcher a thank-you note for this schooling but, curiously, received no reply.)

The rest of the corpse was coaxed into carry cases to be dumped. He returned to Bois de Boulogne, a beautiful lake where he had posed for one of his many photos. Why, he did not know. He joked with the taxi driver that the unusually heavy bags contained his books rather than a body. Amid the stares of the gradually browning sunbathers, he strained to lug the bags to a quiet spot for disposal.

He gazed at the radiant, red sunset, marvelling at people enjoying themselves in the distance and feeling that "for the first time, everything was in colour". He turned at the sound of a scream. A man had spotted the unattended bags, unzipped one to investigate and had seen a neatly chopped calf amid a bed sheet dressing drizzled in blood. "Murderer!" was the cry. Sagawa simply walked away.

The simplistic drawings of his crimes give a lie to his life. He was not the master of his own fiction. The girl he claimed he murdered because she was beautiful was represented in his sketches as a toddler might – a rough outline with bulging eyes that bears no similarity to the bright, caring

## “SAGAWA WAS RELEASED BACK INTO THE PUBLIC WITH NOT A PENNY TO HIS NAME AND NO JOB TO GO TO”

woman who offered to help the struggling stranger on his university project. That stranger was not the fierce, grinning demon figure Sagawa sometimes depicted himself as, but a person who confessed he was frightened of blood and had had a tendency to shake if a girl he liked so much as talked to him. His childlike cartoons were a fantasy that was about to crumple around him.

Sagawa was arrested four days later. As soon as the incident was reported in the newspapers, there was outcry: the French public didn't want to pay for the criminal's upkeep. He was eventually deported back home to Japan.

The true peculiarity of Sagawa's course was that while many may think he should have served the final years of his life in prison, incarceration was merely a palette-cleansing break. Psychiatrists interviewed him and thought him to be suffering from a personality disorder rather than being considered mentally ill by reason of insanity. Treatment would, in theory, do no good. Sagawa was released back into the public with not a penny to his name and no job to go to.

### DISHING THE DIRT

Public tastes are strange, but wherever there's (corpse) muck, there's brass. This is especially the case when there's a local speciality that sounds particularly revolting to outsiders. People from all over the world wanted to get a taste of his



strange life from his own mouth. Sagawa marvels at the recollection that he was contacted out of the blue by the media, who wanted him to write an article. With no one willing to employ him and with a rather extravagant taste in home furnishings (his spacious walls were lined with books and ornaments), he was not going to turn down the huge amounts of money that they metaphorically spread on the table before him.

## HUNGRY MEDIA

Other offers followed: he wrote books, created the art that lines his home's walls, appeared in several documentaries and adult films, became *Spa* magazine's restaurant critic and gave countless interviews to a hungry media eager to explore the paradox of his – and our – human nature. He is not peculiar just because of his crimes, horrendous though they obviously are, but because of the way he has worked with the media to both celebrate and berate himself.

There can, perhaps, be no finer case in point than the film in which he appeared at the behest of Terry Izu. Sagawa, a man who calls himself “a pervert” without a chuckle of self-effacing irony, whose book shelf contains works on classical painters such as Renoir and who has an evident dislike for the notion of vulgarity – things that are tasteless or meaningless – consented to be part of Izu's film. The film sees him tearing into meat in the middle of a field, playing hopscotch in ill-fitting sports gear that exposes his flimsy frame and mugging his way through a tongue-in-cheek rendition of the fairy tale *Little Red Riding Hood*. The emphasis is solely on the supposed absurdity of himself as a murderer. He knew the filmmakers and anticipated audience were laughing at him at least as much as they were laughing with him, if not more.

At the other end of the scale is the *Vice* documentary in which he participated. The haunting introduction is completely at odds with the content and the images. In the introduction, staccato low notes sound sonorously while the camera zooms slowly in and out of grainy photos of a tiny baby. This infant would grow up to be one of the most notorious killers in the world. Notorious not for the amount of people he killed, not for what he did with her after her death, but for the contrast between the horrific nature of his crime and the glee with which, if you'll pardon the phrase, he used his deeds to dine out for years later.

Sagawa is, frankly, remarkable for the way in which he fed his notoriety to become what the publicly written Wikipedia has called a “minor celebrity”. Documentaries about Sagawa are surprisingly few and far between (probably owing to the language barrier), but they rather pale in comparison to the media the man inspired once he got a taste for fame and got himself in the spotlight. The Rolling Stones' song, *Too Much Blood* (from the album *Undercover*) is about him. In the video, Mick Jagger (at the height of his sexual prowess) writhes his way around a stage on a television that is covered in blood while a young woman watching him remonstrates with the offending appliance.

Each piece of media celebrates the contrast between Sagawa as a man who claims to be tormented by his crimes and a celebration of what can only be described as revelling in the act itself; eating human flesh for him is not sustenance



ABOVE Sagawa enjoys his front-row seat at the 1989 NEC Federation Cup Tennis Tournament in Tokyo

or even a sort of religious ritual (as it was for serial-killing cannibal Jeffrey Dahmer) but instead something like artistry. It is not the flesh itself that counts, but the way in which Sagawa approached it as a connoisseur of experiences. Photographs show him poised, cutlery held aloft and at the ready for each new culinary adventure, sometimes naked, often smiling. He is shown viewing unusual food as something that he must triumph over and in doing so further distance himself from humanity. This is both because of, and in spite of, the turmoil he claimed his deeds caused him.

## MEALTIME MASOCHISM

This image of him is oddly not unlike those of the contestants of the old Japanese game show *Za Gaman* (*Endurance*) who would indulge in absurdly torturous physical activities such as hitting their heads with bricks in order to demonstrate their manliness. The outrageousness of these extreme acts led them to becoming more popular in countries other than Japan after they were lampooned on satirical television such as the English series *Tarrant On TV*.

We watch out of bemused amusement at the idea that this petite man could commit something so monstrous. He is officious and rarely seen without a suit jacket in his formal appearances, after all. We may be amazed that Japanese law allows him to walk free and that Japanese culture celebrated his deeds (at least temporarily immortalising him as a celebrity, no less) and we may wonder that we, too,

**“IT IS NOT THE FLESH ITSELF THAT COUNTS, BUT THE WAY IN WHICH SAGAWA APPROACHED IT AS A CONNOISSEUR”**





## THE ART OF KILLING

**SAGAWA REMAINS QUITE THE ARTIST AND HAS MADE A LIVING FROM SUPPLYING HIS PAINTINGS TO THE INTERNATIONAL MURDER MEMORABILIA MARKET**

Sagawa's art reflects his interests. The artist Kazumasa Nakagawa encouraged him to wear costumes of famous actors, but Sagawa preferred the beautiful women. Perhaps unsurprisingly, they are often nude. Asakura's art includes images of his crimes. His fans smoke see his devilish self-portraits next to simple outlines of his victims and the scenarios in which the events took place. Isset's other images include portraits of his young self standing in white space. He shows his eyes, nose and mouth in red ink, with his hair carefully left empty. In these images of his youth, his pale face is then topped with a thick layer of hair. The combination of the pretty faces, stark facial features and our knowledge of his violent behavior shows how people are fooled. The disturbing parts of his personality because of the interesting and sometimes unlikable way he presents himself. After all, the famous artist Andy Warhol made difficult past modern class about identity, eye-catching to the hungry public in his portraits of Marilyn Monroe, so why couldn't Sagawa make a killing with art of himself as a much-loved and murderer?



ルネの復讐!!

ルネとむさぼり喰い  
僕は  
ルネの幽霊と  
むさぼり喰い  
のだ...

Sagawa's art often depicts naked women or the scene of his crime





**ABOVE** The prim and proper Sagawa beams. The wine bottles behind him suggest he lives the high life, but he has spoken of his poverty – he must relive his crime every day to earn money through ‘vulgar’ media activities to survive

are secretly fascinated by both his crimes and the Japanese reaction to it. It is a full course of the macabre with notes of bitterness, sweetness and gruesomeness that the mental palette may find simply impossible to comprehend. His entire story seems a concoction that appears both totally manmade and utterly unreal. What’s more, by choosing to focus on the pop culture that has engulfed him, we see only the impressive-looking metal lid covering the meal rather than the grotty mess of a man that lies within the serving tin.

### THE FORTUNE COOKIE CRUMBLES

Sagawa’s own story, away from the obviously terrible nature of his crime, is sad. He has said: “I have hurt and changed many people,” but has confessed that he is actually unable to feel regret for his crimes – his compulsion was simply too strong. He appears caught in the serving tongs of both self-contradiction and denial, and he frequently changes parts of his story in interviews. It is notable that he did not detail his alleged rape of Renée’s body in the *Vice* documentary, but this information was detailed in written titles after he had spoken. Did he neglect to add that part of the crime himself, or was the footage edited because rapists aren’t as media-style ‘sexy’ as a manic joker?

His crime led to his own life of dissolution. Following his release from hospital, his obsession consumed him. He stole from the family he adored to fund his taste in women, only to find that those women bit back. For years he paid to meet them, even getting himself a fixer to set up his dates despite knowing that the ladies were with him only because he lavished money and holidays on them. He, naturally, did not dare cannibalise again, so instead he took them to see

the world while they took him for a ride. When the women left him (as several did when they learned of his crimes), he could cope with his cannibalistic thoughts by masturbating. That went, too, when he grew older, reached his 60s and found himself impotent. This time, however, he was utterly alone. For the great cannibal clown, the cosmic jape has backfired in his face horribly.

There used to be an impish-looking man who was willing to play a shadow puppet or fantasy stand-in for the idea of our own potential for what we think of as evil. There is now a septuagenarian with receding hair, age boils on his face and a lost, far-away look in his eye.

These days, Sagawa says: “I want to die suffering. Slowly torn apart alive. Of course, I’d rather be torn apart by a beautiful woman than a man”. The most terrible part of this is the mashing-together of such an awful death wish with the idea of companionship. He wants to have someone whom he may adore end his life. He says the words with sadness rather than the sexual salivation (or indeed salvation) of a fantasising masochist; he appears to mean it.

The young boy in his family photographs did not necessarily choose to become evil. The elderly man who bites his lip in documentaries is trying to stop himself from crying. He did what he did because he knew of no other way to be.

Issei Sagawa is still alive today. Aged 66 at the time of writing, he lives in a small apartment complex and needs the care of an assistant following a bout of ill health. His deeds still inspire films, such as the recent, acclaimed, self-reflecting horror film *Cannibal Fog*. The media is both his blessing and his curse. To be tortured to death for your crimes, is that your wish, Sagawa? He told *Vice*, “Yet again, it is my fantasy.”

To have someone willing to play the fool, yet mirror the depths of the human soul? That fantasy, my friends, is ours.



# EXCUSE ME FOR LIVING

ISSEI SAGAWA RELIVES HIS CRIME ON A DAILY BASIS, FEEDING HIS FORTUNE BY STARRING IN DOCUMENTARIES, FILMS AND INTERVIEWS. HERE ARE SOME OF THE MOST NOTORIOUS MEDIA TO CAPITALISE ON SAGAWA'S LIVED-OUT FANTASY



**DOCUMENTING THE CANNIBAL KILLER**  
Sagawa's life story is the subject of a documentary, 'The Curious Case of the Japanese Cannibal', which follows his journey from a notorious killer to a media sensation. The film explores the psychological aspects of his crime and the public's fascination with the story.



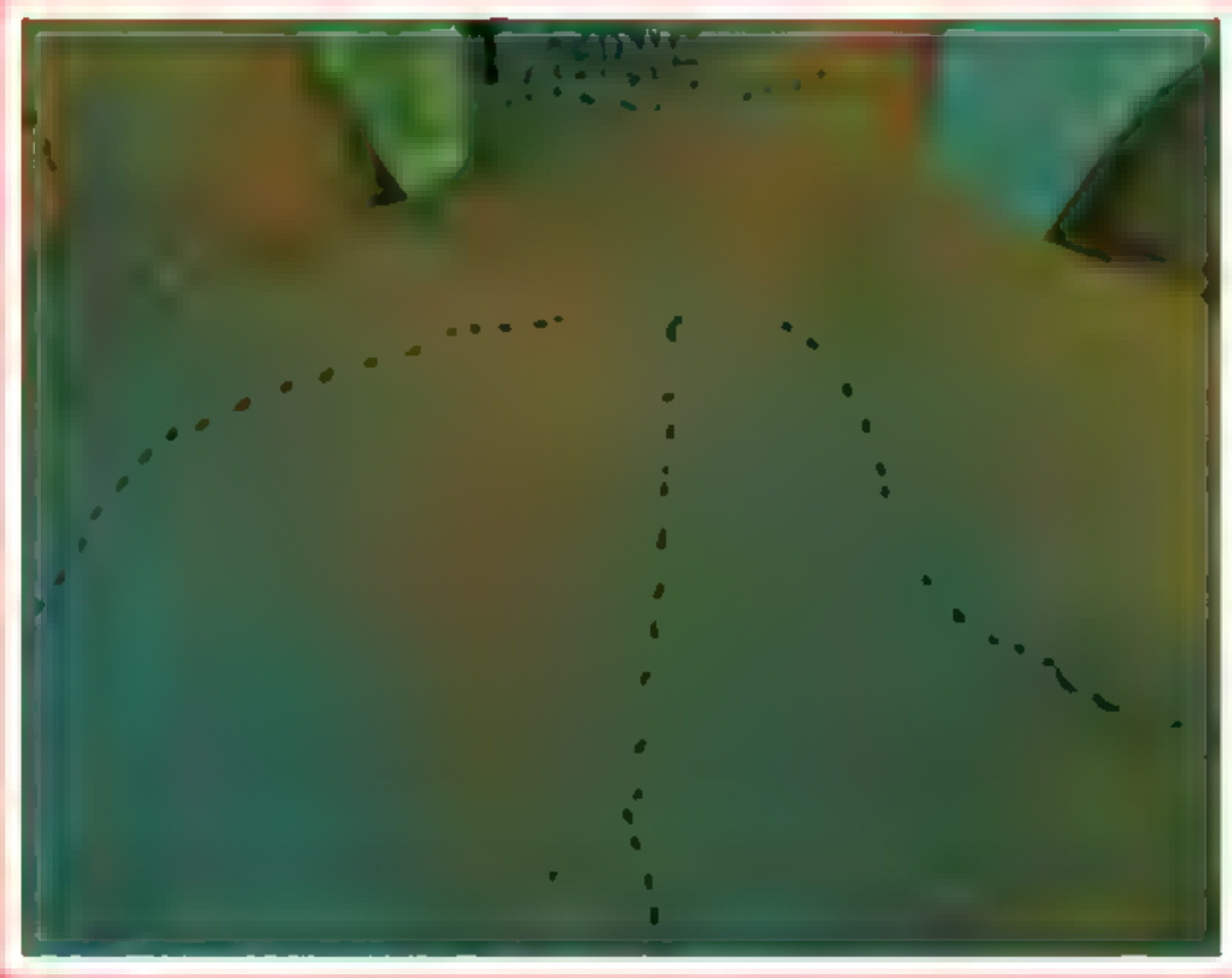
**THE STRANGLERS — LA FOLIE**  
This French film, directed by Jean-Pierre D'Épinay, depicts the story of two young men who become obsessed with strangling women. The film is a psychological thriller that explores the dark side of human nature.



**VICE INTERVIEW: THE CANNIBAL THAT WALKED FREE**  
In a 2012 interview with Vice, Sagawa discussed his life after the crime, his mental health, and the public's perception of him. He revealed that he still struggles with his past and the media's obsession with his story.



**TOO MUCH BLOOD**  
This Japanese film, directed by Takashi Shimizu, is a horror movie that features Sagawa as the main character. The film is a psychological thriller that explores the dark side of human nature.



**THE FOG IS SPREADING**  
This Japanese film, directed by Takashi Shimizu, is a horror movie that features Sagawa as the main character. The film is a psychological thriller that explores the dark side of human nature.



**THE CROSS-STITCH KILLER**  
This Japanese film, directed by Takashi Shimizu, is a horror movie that features Sagawa as the main character. The film is a psychological thriller that explores the dark side of human nature.



**THE BEDROOM (AKA UNFAITHFUL WIFE: SHAMEFUL TORTURE)**  
This Japanese film, directed by Takashi Shimizu, is a horror movie that features Sagawa as the main character. The film is a psychological thriller that explores the dark side of human nature.



**IN THE FOG**  
This Japanese film, directed by Takashi Shimizu, is a horror movie that features Sagawa as the main character. The film is a psychological thriller that explores the dark side of human nature.



**SAGAWA MANGA**  
This Japanese film, directed by Takashi Shimizu, is a horror movie that features Sagawa as the main character. The film is a psychological thriller that explores the dark side of human nature.



# 50 SHADES OF GREY GONE WRONG

HOW A BEAUTY QUEEN'S FEVERISH INFATUATION LED TO THE ABDUCTION AND RAPE OF A MORMON MISSIONARY AND A TABLOID FRENZY

WORDS PAUL DONNELLEY

The year is 1977. The Queen is celebrating her Silver Jubilee and Britain is awash with royal fever. It is the summer of the Ashes, and England beat Australia three-nil in a five-Test series. Meanwhile, Virginia Wade beats Betty Stove in the Ladies' Singles title at Wimbledon and Manchester United win the FA Cup.

But away from royal and sporting glories, our story begins the previous year thousands of miles from England in Salt Lake City, Utah – the home of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, better known as the Mormons.

## JOY TO THE WORLD

Born on 6 August 1949, Joyce McKinney was a blonde, brown-eyed former Miss Wyoming World beauty queen measuring 38C-24-36 and standing 5ft 7in. She was the spoiled only child of David and



**ABOVE** Kirk Anderson was a Church of Latter Day Saints devout. It seemed unlikely that the tall, stocky Mormon could be forced to do anything by the petite McKinney

Marilyn, two school teachers from North Carolina, who graduated with a Master's degree but not the PhD that she would claim. Despite her physical attributes and intellect, she was not satisfied and yearned to be famous.

After her conversion to Mormonism in 1972, she would achieve that aim, albeit not in the way perhaps she had envisaged.

In 1973, she moved to Provo, Utah, and enrolled at the School of Theatre and Cinematic Arts at the church's Brigham Young University. "Don't call me Joyce," she had told the male students (she rarely had anything to do with the female ones), "My name is Joy. Like in *Joy To The World* – you know, the hymn."

McKinney's first amorous target was Wayne Osmond of the celebrated singing family. His mother, Olive, did all she could to prevent the buxom blonde's involvement with her fourth son. Despite their closeness, Joy learned that Wayne had his own beauty queen – Kathlyn White, a former Miss Utah, whom he married in November 1974. The news sent Joyce into a downward spiral and she ended up in hospital with emotional trauma. The Osmonds' PR Ron Clark said, "She became very possessive of a light friendship."

## ICE CREAM FOR KIRK

A chance meeting outside an ice cream parlour on the main drag in Provo threw McKinney together with 6ft 2in Kirk Anderson, aged 19. She was sitting in a flashy persimmon-coloured Chevrolet Corvette and was dressed, as always, provocatively. When Anderson was asked if he thought McKinney was beautiful, he said "It was the car I noticed first."

They had a brief fling that ended in August 1975 (apparently both were virgins prior to consummating the affair) and she claims that she became pregnant but miscarried. Feeling guilt at losing his chastity against the teachings of his church, Anderson confessed to his bishop, by which time Joy had become infatuated and started to stalk him. Kirk's car was run off the road and his windows at home smashed. The church headquarters told Anderson that it might be better

if he left for missionary work elsewhere. The church moved Anderson to California and then Oregon, where, in an effort to escape her attention, he lived under an assumed name. Joy was in hot pursuit so it was decided that a posting overseas might deter the besotted blonde.

Distraught, McKinney found herself depressed and was voluntarily admitted to the Timpanagos Center in Provo for treatment. McKinney claimed that she escaped through a window. She hired a private detective to follow Anderson wherever he went, paying for the detective by posing for bondage porn magazines and working as an escort performing BDSM and oral sex.

Kirk Anderson, a missionary for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, arrived at his new location in East Grinstead, Sussex in England in September 1976. He moved to Reading before settling into Milton Gardens, Epsom with 21-year-old Kimball Smith. Assuming that he was now safe from McKinney's clutches, Anderson went about his business. The man could not know that the worst lay ahead.

## HERE COMES THE FBI

McKinney hired Finlays Bureau of Investigation, a private detective agency in south London, using the name Beth Palmquist, paying £120 (the equivalent of about £900 in modern terms). They discovered Anderson at the church in East Ewell and McKinney set off in hot pursuit, accompanied by Keith May, who was as besotted with McKinney as she was with Kirk. Using the names Kathie Vaughn Bare and Paul van Deusen, they arrived at Heathrow on 5 August 1977.

Exactly a fortnight later, May (now using the name Bob Bosler) had introduced himself to Kirk Anderson, then 21, and said that he was considering converting to Mormonism. The plan had been put into action.

On Thursday 15 September 1977, Scotland Yard announced that Anderson had disappeared in "most unusual circumstances". The day before, Anderson had agreed to meet Bosler and his female friend at a tabernacle on Banstead Road, East Ewell, Surrey. That was the last time he



had been seen. The police were worried. They contacted their counterparts in Salt Lake City, Utah, who alerted them to Anderson's history of being stalked by an obsessive woman.

### FREE AT LAST

Three days after his kidnapping, Kirk Anderson reappeared, claiming that a woman and a male accomplice had held him, tied and handcuffed, in a remote cottage in Lower Halstock, Okehampton on the edge of Dartmoor.

Detective Chief Superintendent William Hucklesby, later the head of the anti-terrorist squad, asked the public for help in tracking down two Americans portraying themselves as man and wife. They were 24-year-old assistant architect Keith Joseph May and 28-year-old Joyce McKinney, who went under a sleuth of pseudonyms. Within hours, Devon and Cornwall Constabulary arrested the two in their hired car at a roadblock on the A30. They found the cottage where Kirk had been held, which had been rented for £50 a week under the name of honeymooning couple Mr and Mrs Layton. The police examined the room in which Anderson had been kept and discovered an array of bondage items.

DCS Hucklesby said, off the record, "This is the most extraordinary case I've ever investigated. All I can say is that we found, er, certain equipment. I can't go into details but I'll tell you what; I've never been lucky enough to have something like this happen to me."

The car had contained two imitation .38 revolvers; a bottle of ether mixed with chloroform; baby doll nighties and a wedding trousseau; tapes of soothing music; cinnamon-flavoured rubbing oil and fur-lined handcuffs.

On 29 September, McKinney and May appeared in court charged with forcibly abducting, assaulting and unlawfully imprisoning Anderson. They were remanded in custody for a week by magistrates at Epsom, Surrey.

### PRAY FOR THE MORMON

As she arrived in court on 6 October for a second hearing, McKinney exposed herself in a struggle with a female prison warder, much to the delight of the press photographers. She held up notes written on pages torn from the Bible that read, "Ask Christians to pray for me", "Please tell the truth. My reputation is at stake", "He had sex with me for four days" and "Please get the truth to the public. He made it look like a kidnapping."

At a hearing on 13 October, DCS Hucklesby explained that McKinney had entered Britain on a false passport and forged papers in eight fake names. McKinney had confessed her intention to

**BELOW** There was (and still is) a disappointing lack of evidence for exactly what happened, but the best stories are those with unanswered questions, which left Fleet Street to make it as salacious and scandalous as it liked



**“ I’VE NEVER BEEN LUCKY ENOUGH TO HAVE SOMETHING LIKE THIS HAPPEN TO ME ”**



## “ ON THE FIRST NIGHT, MCKINNEY AND ANDERSON KISSED AND HUGGED IN BED. ON THE SECOND NIGHT, ANDERSON WAS TETHERED TO IT ”

use handcuffs, leg shackles, imitation guns and a mixture of ether-chloroform in the kidnapping. For the defence, Stuart Elgrod, a young court-appointed solicitor, said, “Passion was the motive.”

McKinney and May were remanded in custody for a second time after police opposed bail, as DCS Hucklesby had convinced the court, “I believe Miss McKinney would attempt to interfere with Anderson.” McKinney was held at HM Prison Holloway, where, she informed her parents, the lesbians there would simply not leave her alone.

### ROPES AND CHAINS AND CINNAMON OIL

At the hearing on 23 November, prosecuting counsel Neil Denison, QC retold the events, stating that from their first meeting in Provo, Utah there had been a strong sexual attraction between the two, but that Anderson had been racked with guilt for engaging in pre-marital sex and tried to end the affair.

On the day of his abduction, Anderson met May and had pulled a fake gun on him. “I felt him push something into my ribs and he grabbed my shoulder. I was startled, and, as I looked down, I saw a gun. I was quite scared. He told me to come with him. I did not then know the gun was imitation. He took me over to a car parked about 50 yards away. I got into the rear seat. Joy was in the front seat wearing a dark wig and she had another gun. I thought that was real, too. She said something like how did I think ‘8,000 miles of ocean was going to keep us apart’ or something to that effect. She got into the back seat with me about five minutes after we left the chapel. She told me to put my head down and Bob told her to put a blanket over my head so I could not see where I was going.”

May drove to the cottage at Okehampton, where McKinney prepared southern fried chicken, mashed potatoes and chocolate cake – Anderson’s favourite foods. She made it clear that Anderson could not leave until he agreed to marry her. In the bedroom after dinner, the bed was made up with

blue silk sheets “to match Kirk’s eyes.” On the first night, McKinney and Anderson kissed and hugged in bed but went no further. On the second night, May used a 10ft chain to tether Anderson to it and left the pair alone for twenty-four hours.

It was on the third night that things escalated after Anderson had asked McKinney for a back rub with cinnamon oil to relax him. Joy said that she tore off his Mormon “garment” – underwear that male and female Mormons wear to help them to not give in to sins of the flesh. “There was only one way to make Kirk get out of Mormonism, and that was to make love to him,” she later recounted, “because for a Mormon missionary to have a love affair is totally taboo.”

McKinney had oral sex with Anderson and then full intercourse took place, although it was against Anderson’s wishes, he said. “The chains were tight and I could not move. She proceeded to have intercourse. I did not want it to happen. I was very upset,” he added. “I felt like she was raping me.” Asked how a woman could rape a man, he explained that she had performed oral sex until he was aroused and then straddled him. McKinney disputed that, saying a man could only have sex if he wanted, otherwise it was “like trying to force a marshmallow into a parking meter slot”.

Stuart Elgrod reminded Kirk that when he was returned to London, he was alone with Joyce but made no attempt to escape. They went to the



**BELOW** McKinney with Fleet Street journalist Peter Tory, who wrote for the Sunday Express, Daily Mirror and Daily Star. Tory followed McKinney for the scoop after the Express paid her £40,000



**LEFT** A former beauty queen of Miss Wyoming World (not to be mistaken with the ‘Miss Wyoming’ competition), McKinney was used to being in the limelight. She claims to have an IQ of 168





LEFT "I don't have to beg for boys' services", McKinney said in court, claiming the relations to have been consensual. "I am 38-24-36, so I don't have to beg... [he was] grinning like a monkey"

American Express office in Haymarket, walked around Trafalgar Square then went for lunch at the Hard Rock Cafe in Piccadilly: "You didn't even try to escape?" He replied, "No, because I knew I was going back to Epsom."

The massed ranks of the press found one aspect of the whole affair puzzling. McKinney was a beauty queen with an impressive bust. Kirk Anderson did not appear the kind of man to arouse such deep passions in a woman like McKinney. He weighed about 18 stone, had huge hands and feet, "a bovine, milk-fed look," wore aviator glasses and shambled flat-footed rather than walked. Joy explained, "He was the sweetest-smelling, cleanest man ah ever knew. He's the shower and wash himself two, three times a day. Every little hair was perfectly clean. And his skin, ah just loved to smell his skin."

### CAUGHT IN THE ACT

She explained that she and Kirk had been caught in flagrante delicto by her father on a waterbed she had placed on the floor of the living room in her parents' house at Provo. "Daddy came and caught us in the middle," she recalled. "He spluttered and said he was just going to get a glass

of water but poor Kirk," her index finger flopped forward, "he just went like that."

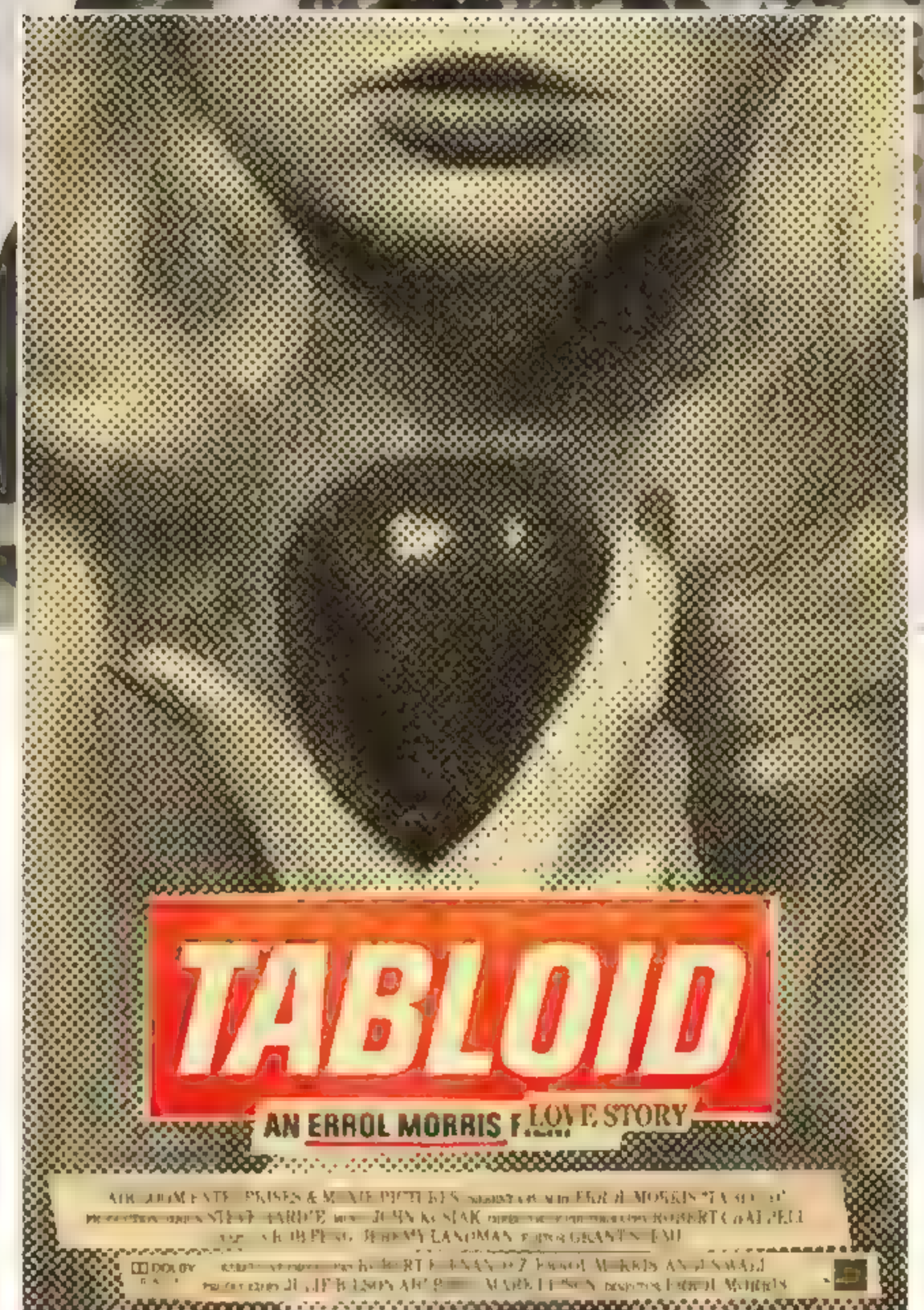
At a hearing on 6 December the court referred to a previous statement by McKinney in which she said that all the activity with Anderson was consensual and the bondage and oral sex was to help out with his difficulties. "Kirk cannot have an orgasm unless he is tied up," she said. "His mother was over-dominant and he did not get pleasure from sexual intercourse."

She told the court, "I loved Kirk so much I would have skied down Mount Everest in the nude with a carnation up my nose."

Stuart Elgrod for Joy tried to get the charges dismissed, as did Bob Marshall Andrews for Keith May, claiming that May saw the intervention not as a kidnap but a rescue mission from an "oppressive and tyrannical organisation."

Elgrod told magistrates: "You could not commit a cat on this evidence, let alone this young lady." Quoting from the *Song of Solomon*, he added: "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it" before finishing with a flourish of Shakespeare: "Methinks the Mormon doth protest too much."

Joy knew her audience and aided them as she went on. The adventure had cost her \$17,000 –



## LOVE STORY OR TABLOID SLUR?

A DOCUMENTARY WAS INEVITABLE, IT'S ONLY SURPRISING IT TOOK 25 YEARS BEFORE SOMEONE MADE IT

In 2009, Joyce McKinney was approached by Errol Morris, a filmmaker who was making a documentary film called *Tabloid* about her life. McKinney participated, apparently under the impression that it was about the paparazzi. However, she hated the resulting film, accusing Morris of making her look like a crazed sex offender and a prostitute. She appeared at screenings shouting "Liar, liar" at the screen and even tried to sue for defamation, but her case was thrown out of court with prejudice.

**“ MCKINNEY HAD ORAL SEX WITH ANDERSON AND THEN FULL INTERCOURSE TOOK PLACE, ALTHOUGH IT WAS AGAINST ANDERSON’S WISHES, HE SAID ”**



**RIGHT** During her 1977 trial, McKinney professed her innocence in Anderson's kidnap from the back of a police van via a number of notes scrawled on pages torn from the Bible



helpfully converted into £9,000 – “my entire life savings.” She went on, “A woman raping a man? Him, 18 stone and me, eight stone? Come on who’s kidding who?”

“Why was he moving his hips with me? I said, ‘Honey, does that feel good? Do you like it like this?’ And he goes, ‘Phew – HOT’.” She continued, “His mother can rub his back from now on. I don’t want anything more to do with him.” If only those words had been true.

Magistrates decided that McKinney and May did have a case to answer and both were committed for trial and released on £3,000 bail each after three months in prison. They had to stay in the house rented by McKinney’s parents in Tufnell Park, have no contact with Anderson, observe a 9pm to 9am curfew and report to police twice daily. Although Joy was released immediately, it took Keith May three additional days before he could raise the bail money.

A date for the court case was set for the Central Criminal Court on 2 May 1978, but the desire of the British public to be entertained by yet more details of the blonde model and the manacled Mormon were to be dashed.

### TRAWLING THE STREET OF SHAME

Once free, Joy made the most of her liberty. She trawled the newsrooms of the national press and offered to tell her story exclusively, starting the bidding at £50,000 (£278,000 at 2015 values). She also placed an advert in *Variety* announcing she was “writing a book and screen-play! This moving

love story has taken Britain by storm, invoking front-page headlines in all British newspapers. Due to the overwhelming number of enquiries by phone (10-20 calls per day), she is forced to look for representation. Legitimate parties please contact by letter only: Stuart Elgrod”.

Unfortunately for Joy, the *Daily Mirror* had also discovered another advert placed by McKinney in the LA Free Press that revealed a slightly less salubrious side to her. It was for the same work she had done to finance her pursuit of Kirk Anderson. Calling herself “Joey”, she offered “S&M, B&D, escort services, nude wrestling, erotic phone calls, dirty panties or pictures. Mail your fantasies to Joey. Upper income clientele preferred (Men or women). Ah love shy boys, dirty ol’ men and sugah daddies!”

On 13 March, bail restrictions were relaxed, allowing her go out at night. On 11 April, Peter Tory, the deputy editor on the William Hickey gossip column on the *Daily Express*, accompanied Joy to the premiere of *The Stud*, the film version of Jackie Collins’ bonkbuster, starring her older sister Joan and Oliver Tobias. Tory and McKinney swept up to the Empire Leicester Square in a Rolls-Royce and the flashbulbs popped.

At the end of the night, Tory dropped her off at the house she shared with Keith May. Tory would be the last British journalist to see the pair, for the next day May (calling himself Richard McGrory) and McKinney (under the fake name of Darleen O’Connor), equipped with fourteen suitcases, flew out of London Airport to Shannon in Ireland. There they claimed to be members of a deaf and dumb acting troupe on their way to Canada

to perform. They boarded their aeroplane and entered America at Buffalo.

### FLYING BLIND

The story did not end there. The *Daily Mirror* had, with some help from Joy, compiled a huge dossier to run after the court case but was forbidden by the Director of Public Prosecutions who had yet to decide whether to issue orders for extradition. The newspaper’s editor Mike Molloy summed up his disappointment, saying, “I feel as if Harry Truman might if he had been given an atom bomb at the end of the Second World War – and not had a plane to drop it from.”

Molloy would soon get the opportunity to detonate his atomic splash. However, it was one of his tabloid rivals, the *Daily Express*, who found McKinney and May in Atlanta, Georgia, where the pair were masquerading as Indians and nuns.

### KISS N’ TELL

Tory had flown out to Atlanta with the cash in a suitcase. McKinney and May turned up at the Hilton hotel in Atlanta airport in greasypaint “like characters from a really bad amateur production of *Ali Baba*,” Tory said.

Fearing that the FBI were following her, McKinney insisted on moving from hotel to hotel while she related her colourful past. “There was no sense that she had ever been anything but a sweet country girl and she got caught up in this business in London,” Tory said. “I thought it was a bit boring really.” On Thursday 18 May





## “ IN IRELAND THEY CLAIMED TO BE MEMBERS OF A DEAF AND DUMB ACTING TROUPE ON THEIR WAY TO CANADA TO PERFORM ”

1978, the *Express* published McKinney's story under the headline 'My Undying Love'. There was a photograph of her in a polo-neck sweater with a carnation clenched between her teeth. On the same day, the *Daily Mirror* ran a spoiler depicting McKinney as a woman of loose morals, accompanied by a photograph of her naked.

In a Myrtle Beach, South Carolina hotel, McKinney was very upset by the *Mirror* story. "It was like something from *The Exorcist*," Tory recalled. "She screamed and screamed and she appeared to me to be about to jump off the balcony. She ran for the balcony and tore the curtain down. I thought, God, she's going to go over the edge and there were these American tourists underneath in deckchairs — she would have taken them with her."

McKinney was taken to hospital and sedated. Back in Fleet Street the following day, the *Express* defended her honour, while the *Mirror* ran a photograph of her sitting naked on a horse.

On 19 June 1984, McKinney was arrested near Salt Lake City Airport where Anderson was working: she was accused of continued harassment. In her car, police found a length of rope and a pair of handcuffs.

The case was dismissed on 21 September when she failed to show up in court. On 14 July 2004, she was arrested for communicating threats and demonstrating cruelty to animals.

### YAPPILY EVER AFTER

In August 2008, calling herself Bernann McKinney, Joyce was again in the news after

paying £25,000 to South Korean scientists to have her dead Pitbull terrier, Booger (who died of cancer in April 2006), cloned. Five puppies were born on 28 July 2008.

In 2009, she was approached by Errol Morris, the maker of a documentary film *Tabloid* and participated. However, she hated the resulting film and appeared at screenings shouting "Liar, liar" at the screen.

### WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Joyce McKinney lives in Palm Springs with her five cloned dogs. She told a journalist: "I'm elderly now, I have a heart condition, I'm crippled and partially blind. I'm just a little old lady, looking back, eyes misting, on an incredible lost love."

Kirk Anderson lives with his Mormon-approved wife in Utah, where he works as a travel agent. Keith May died aged 51 in 2004 of kidney failure, while Stuart Elgrod moved to Israel in 1980 and died after a long illness in 2010. Bob Marshall-Andrews, QC retired as a Labour MP in 2010, having long been a thorn in Tony Blair's side. Peter Tory worked for many years on the William Hickey diary on the *Daily Express*, and also wrote gossip columns for the *Sunday Express*, *Daily Mirror* and *Daily Star*. He died of cancer in 2012, aged 73. Mike Molloy edited the *Daily Mirror* from 1975 until 1985. After leaving the newspaper industry, he began writing children's books. Meanwhile, Neil Dennison, QC retired in March 2001, having been the Common Serjeant of London since 1993, the second most senior resident judge at the Old Bailey.

## BEAUTY MADE ME A SEX SLAVE

A FEEDING FRENZY DESCENDED ON THE BUXOM BLONDE; THIS WAS PAYDIRT FOR THE BRITISH TABLOIDS



### THE DAILY MIRROR

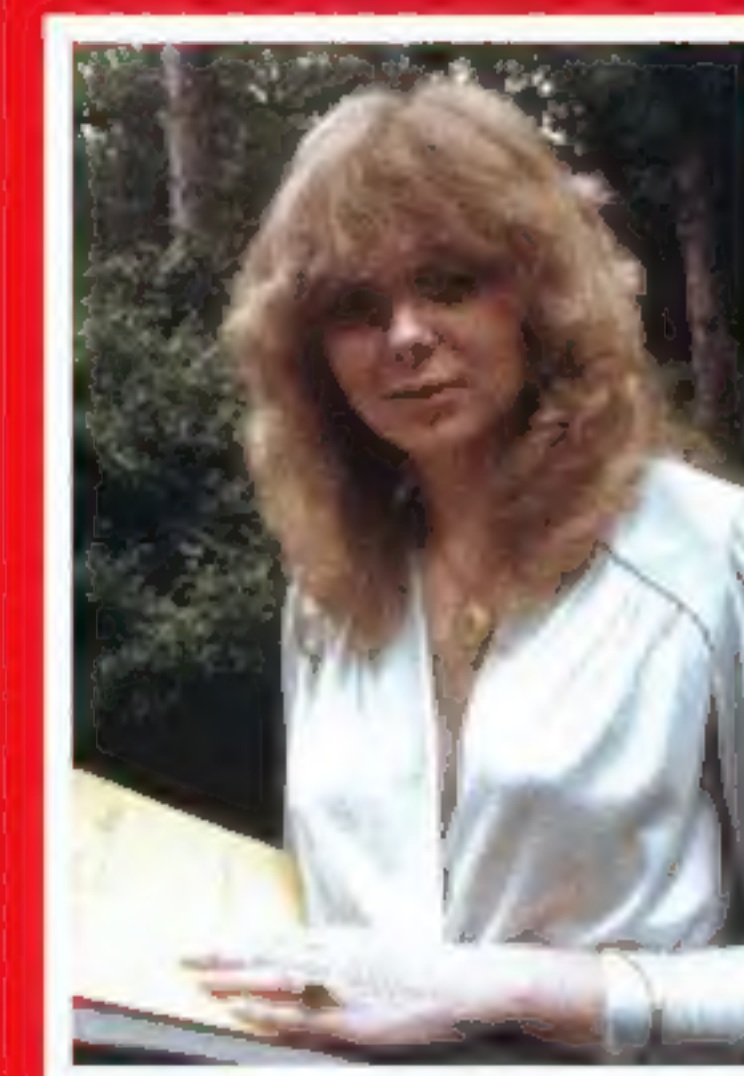
22 May 1978

The *Daily Mirror* loved the story of a lusty siren who entrapped the much larger and apparently incorruptible Anderson. A bit of digging and a lucky lead turned up soft porn photos from her dubious past, which are promptly printed the same day as the *Daily Express* gets its exclusive.

### THE DAILY EXPRESS

22 May 1978

The *Daily Express* gets the scoop when McKinney asks for £40k for her story. The paper runs with the headline 'My Undying Love: I still want my Mormon'. It has since described as being "a bit boring really" by reporter Peter Tory, but at least it comes straight from the horse's mouth.



### AUTOBIOGRAPHY

May 1984

McKinney never really lost her taste for the limelight. A 1980s autobiography portrays McKinney as a princess who has lost her prince, though it was never published. She soon turns up in the papers, this time having been arrested for stalking Anderson near his workplace in 1984.

### DOG CLONING

7 August 2008

After nearly a quarter of a century, McKinney has hired South Korean scientists to clone her pit bull terrier. It's an interesting story to begin with, then the papers discover that it's their favourite, former Mormon-abducting, kinky beauty queen at the centre of it all.



### TABLOID

3 September 2010

McKinney is on the other side of the law as she pursues a common lawsuit against the filmmaker Errol Morris, who she feels has defamed her in his film *Tabloid* as a sex offender and a prostitute. The suit fails as the court decides that the film did not misrepresent her.



# SPIT! DON'T SWALLOW...

A NORTH CAROLINA DENTIST WAS JAILED AFTER INJECTING HIS SEMEN INTO PATIENTS' MOUTHS – A DECADE LATER HIS ATTEMPTS TO OPEN A NEW DENTAL OFFICE ARE THWARTED

**P**atients of John Robert Hall, a dentist from Charlotte, North Carolina, got a shock in 2004 when they went in for a check-up – and found Hall had tricked them into swallowing his semen.

“When I swallowed I tasted it, and it was semen,” said one of his victims. “He told me it was cleaning solution.” Another said, “That smells like sperm,” while Hall was preparing a syringe filled with a suspicious substance, to which he replied, “You’re crazy.” He told her it was a solution that would help stop oral bleeding.

In total, six patients spoke out about Hall’s behaviour, claiming he used syringes to squirt his bodily fluids down their throats. A seventh also added that he jumped on top of her while she was lying on the dental chair and, “...began to gyrate against her lower body in a sexual manner.”

The state dental board accused Hall of violating dentistry’s standards of care, as well as engaging in immoral conduct and sexually assaulting his patients. His licence was suspended on 5 November 2004. He was taken into custody shortly after, and police investigated the allegations against him.

Before he was arrested, several of Hall’s former employees noticed suspicious-looking syringes left in his office, but he maintained that he was collecting samples of his own semen as he was taking Propecia (used in the treatment of male pattern hair loss) and was concerned about low sperm count.

At his trial, Hall was ultimately found guilty of seven misdemeanour counts of sexual assault and was given a rather lenient four months in Mecklenberg County jail. His licence to practice dentistry was also permanently revoked.

But it didn’t end there. In November 2015, Hall almost opened a new dental office in Belize, but his plan was foiled after he ran an ad for a new dental assistant in a newspaper.

“We did wonder how he had obtained a licence to practice [dentistry], as traditionally this is a painstaking, lengthy process that discourages many foreigners from even trying,” said the *The San Pedro Sun* editor, Tamara Sniffin, whose suspicion was raised after printing the ad.

Hall’s request to renew his dentistry licence may have been approved in return for bribes given to Belizean officials; according to Sniffin, the practice is not uncommon. Sniffin alerted the San Pedro police, and Hall was arrested a few hours before the new office was set to open.

“There was no way in hell I was going to let that pervert touch one person on this island,” Sniffin continued. “I thank those who brought it to our attention and worked with us on shutting this creep down.”

Hall was released after posting bail, and lamented his arrest in a 1,400-word manifesto. He wrote: “I never thought

I would be ridiculed, cussed at, and made fun of with harmful threats to me and my dog based on assumptions instead of facts when I was accused of a disgusting and absurd action of placing semen in patients’ mouths. I did not do what I was accused of doing!”



Local newspaper *The San Pedro Sun* was present when Hall’s clinic was shut down on its opening day



# World's WEIRDEST Crimes

Future PLC Quay House, The Ambury, Bath, BA1 1UA

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## Cover images

Adobe Stock, Alamy, Dreamstime, Getty Images, Rex Features, Thinkstock

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Media packs are available on request

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## Circulation

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Printed in the UK

**Distributed by** Marketforce – [www.marketforce.co.uk](http://www.marketforce.co.uk)

For enquiries, please email: [mfcommunications@futurenet.com](mailto:mfcommunications@futurenet.com)

**World's Weirdest Crimes (RCB6966)**

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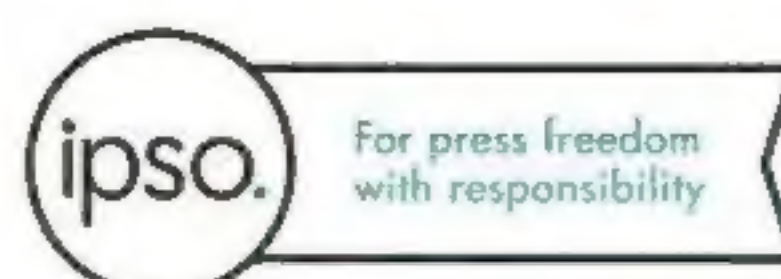


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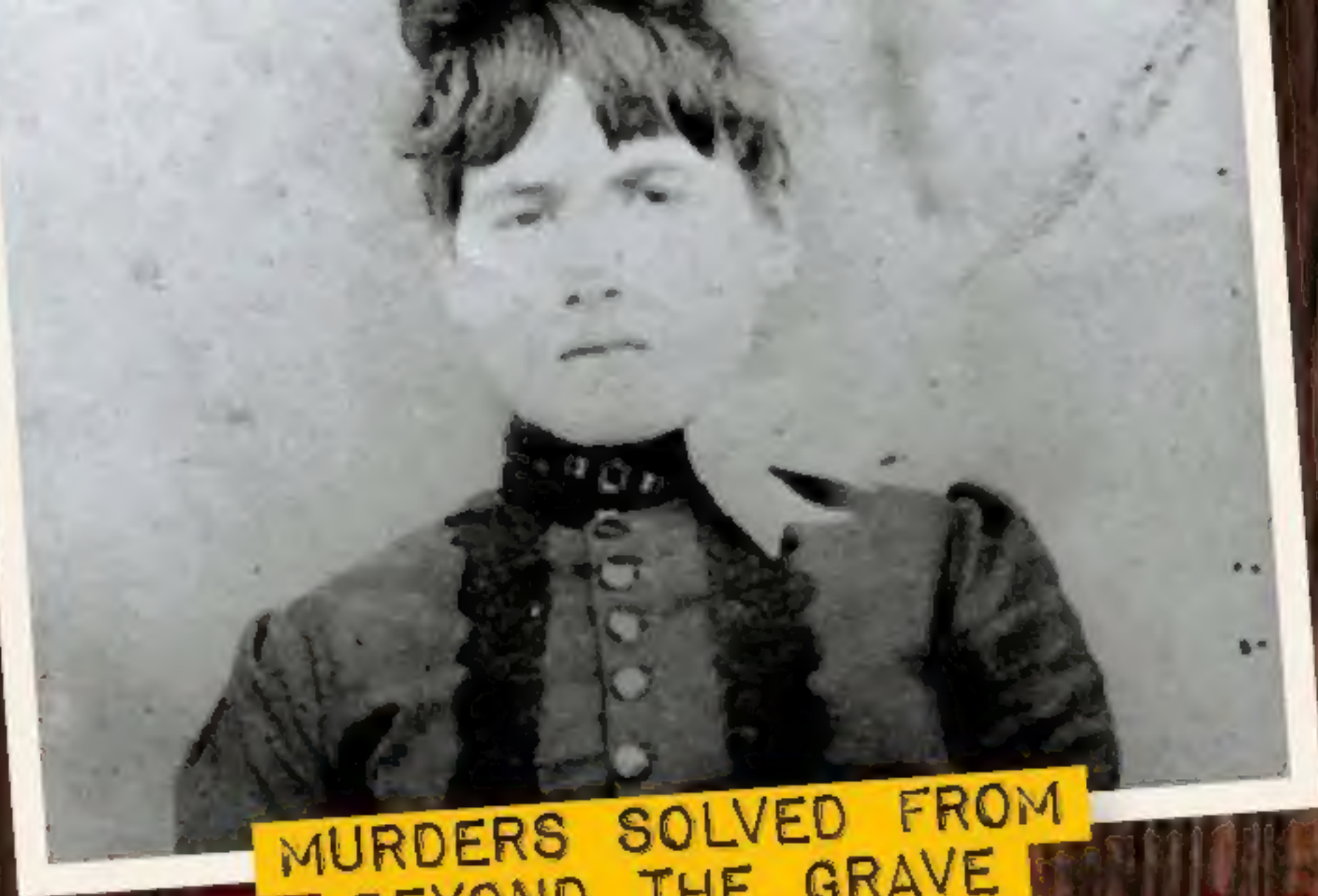
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CURSED OR COINCIDENCE?

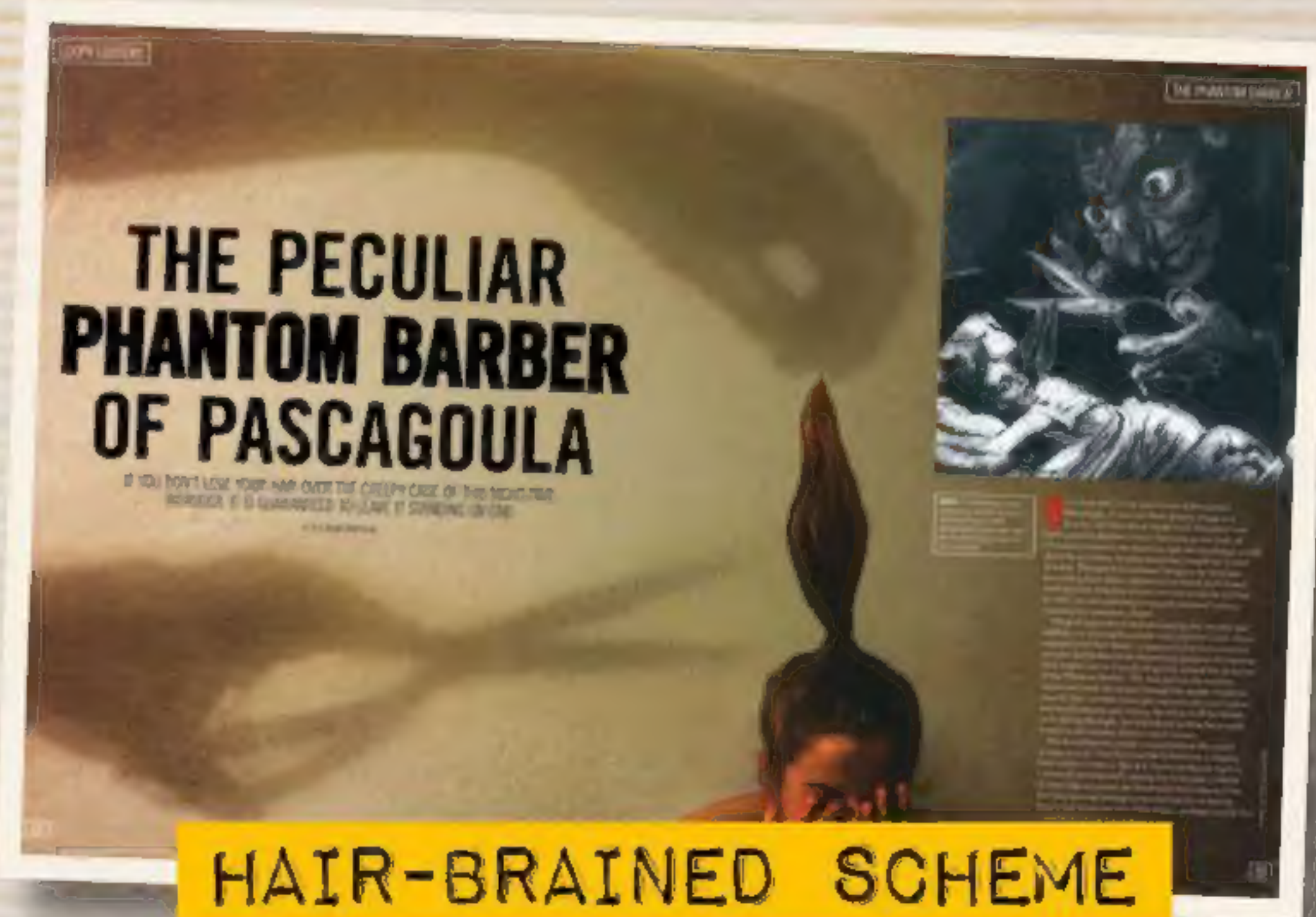
# World's WEIRDEST Crimes

CURIOUS CASES OF BIZARRE BRUTALITY AND OUTLANDISH OFFENCES



DEMONIC POSSESSION?

COULD SATAN HIMSELF BE RESPONSIBLE FOR A SAVAGE SLAYING IN CONNECTICUT?



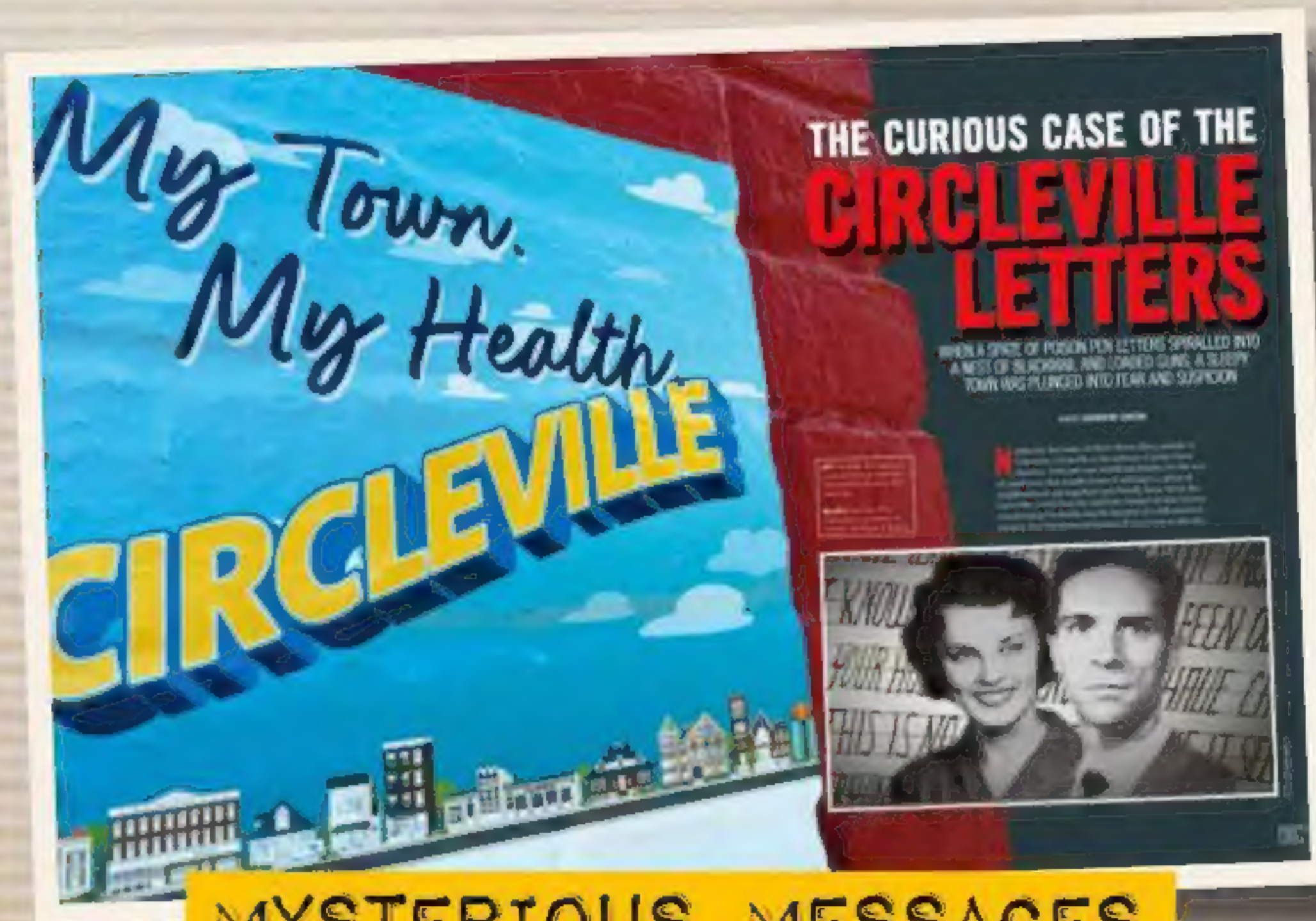
HAIR-BRAINED SCHEME

WHAT COULD A NIGHT-TIME INTRUDER WANT WITH A STRAND OF HAIR?



BAFFLING BARBARITY

UNFATHOMABLE AND UNPROVOKED ATROCITIES COMMITTED BY A COMPLETE STRANGER



MYSTERIOUS MESSAGES

A SLEEPY TOWN SWEEPED UP IN A WHIRLWIND OF FEAR AND SUSPICION